

David & Carolyn Koepke
148 Pleasant Street
Richmond, Me 04357
calendarbay@roadrunner.com
207-522-3574

December 20, 2022

Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs

Subject: LD3 Winter Energy Relief Payment Program

Dear Committee:

It was with great disappointment that the emergency heating relief bill was blocked by 8 Senators. Hopefully the public hearing will provide sufficient feedback by other Maine citizens to satisfy their demand for this procedural delay, and promote immediate passage of LD3. The importance of this legislation to us is as follows:

- * We use oil and LP for our heating fuels. Our last delivery for a half-tank of each totalled \$900. During the coldest winter months from December thru February, our average consumption is a full tank of each, so the expectation is that the cost will double up to \$1800/month.
- * Our last electric bill increased 130% to \$133, which again was before the coldest winter months, and before the significant rate increase in January. Our expectation for this expense is now \$200/month, which is double our past average for winter, let alone being much higher as well the rest of next year.
- * For an unknown reason our gasoline prices have been consistently 50-60 cents above the national average for months. News reports the price may fall below \$3 by Christmas? Dream on Maine.
- * As everyone knows, food prices have also skyrocketed for months, and even though we attempt to purchase the majority of items on sale, those prices are still well above the past.

In summary, in our estimation the impact on our budget for all the above will amount to nearly \$1500/month more this winter, which will exceed our Social Security benefits by that amount that we've been able to survive on before now for all our expenses. While the emergency heating relief aid will only offset the cost of 2 weeks of fuel it would be most appreciated, and hopefully come when we need it most - and before next March.

Sincerely,

David & Carolyn Koepke