



END  
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End Fuel Poverty Coalition  
c/o NRPC  
PO Box 42872  
London N19 4XU

Minister for Energy and Climate Change  
Gregory Barker MP  
Address  
Address  
Postcode

02 December 2010

Dear Minister

### **Independent review of the fuel poverty target and definition**

The End Fuel Poverty Coalition (EFPC), an alliance of environmental, poverty, health and consumer organisations, notes the Government's announcement in the Comprehensive Spending Review that it will initiate an independent review of the fuel poverty target and definition before the end of 2010.

The UK Fuel Poverty Strategy, published in November 2001, committed the Government to ending fuel poverty, as far as reasonably practicable, for vulnerable households by 2010 and for all households by 2016. The Strategy document states that: "the publication and delivery of the Strategy fulfils the terms of the (2000) Warm Homes Act". Consequently we welcome the Prime Minister's recent comments in which he recognised the need to help the most vulnerable households keep their homes warm at an affordable cost. However, we are concerned that the 2010 target has not been met and do not see how the 2016 target can be achieved without additional policies and resources.

The Government estimates that there are currently 4 million fuel-poor households in England. Consumer Focus research estimates that 3.3 million of these households are 'vulnerable' according to the Government's definition of vulnerability. We therefore consider the review should focus attention on the policies, programmes and resources required to comply with the provisions of the Warm Homes Act and end fuel poverty for all households.

Supporters of the EFPC have an in-depth knowledge of fuel poverty, much of it based on working with and delivering services to low-income and fuel-poor households. We therefore consider we can make a valuable contribution to the review, including the setting of its terms of reference.

We also consider - as does the Government's Fuel Poverty Advisory Group and the Energy and Climate Change Committee - that we need a comprehensive and detailed 'road map' that sets out the policies and programmes required to address the factors contributing to fuel poverty (poor heating and insulation standards, low household income and unaffordable energy prices) and how, when and by whom these policies and programmes are delivered.



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The Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act originated as a Private Members Bill and succeeded because it had universal support across all political parties. The need to address fuel poverty has never been contentious or party political. Members of the public, MPs, the media and local authorities all see the issue of fuel poverty as worthy of national attention and priority action.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the issues with you in advance of the announcement of further details of the review and hope that such a meeting can be scheduled at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely

#### Supporters of the End Fuel Poverty Coalition

Mervyn Kohler, Age UK

Andrew Warren, Association for the Conservation of Energy

Martin Chadwick, Beat the Cold

Ian Preston, Centre for Sustainable Energy

Tim Nichols, Child Poverty Action Group

Mike O'Connor, Consumer Focus

Neil Coyle, Disability Alliance

Bob Smytherman, Federation of Private Residents' Associations

David Timms, Friends of the Earth

Thomas Cottam, Macmillan Cancer Support

Andrew Sharp, National Childbirth Trust

Jenny Saunders, National Energy Action

Rachel Barber, National Federation of Women's Institutes

Alison Purshouse, National Pensioners Convention

Hugh Goulbourne, National Right to Fuel Campaign

Graham Whitham, Save the Children

Mike Jeram, Unison

Angela Mawle, UK Public Health Association

cc Rt Hon Chris Huhne MP, Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change  
Meg Hilier, MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change