



# News from

Office of the Attorney General  
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## Attorney General

## Richard Blumenthal

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### ***ATTORNEY GENERAL, AS CT GAS PRICES REACH HIGHEST IN NATION, CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION ON HIS GASOLINE LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS***

Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, in a letter to legislative leaders released today, called for legislative action on his gasoline and heating oil initiatives when the General Assembly convenes next week for a special session.

In a letter to Senate President Pro Tempore Donald Williams and Speaker of the House James Amann, Blumenthal said immediate action on his gasoline and home heating proposals -- held in the mere final hours of this past legislative session -- is imperative because Connecticut's gas prices are now the highest in the nation.

"No question the legislature must act -- and act immediately -- now that Connecticut has the highest gasoline prices in the nation," Blumenthal said. "The upcoming special session is the right time for relief to consumers, who are understandably and rightfully angry -- demanding answers and action. We need reliable real-time data and evidence on who is profiting and profiteering at our expense, so we can stop it. Legislative leaders should include the adoption of gasoline and heating oil legislation that I proposed -- and the legislative committees and leadership approved -- in their call for this June 11 special session. There was consensus on these measures, but no vote was taken in the House or Senate in the final hours.

"Looking beyond the special session, more effective steps are vital such as a ban on zone pricing, a windfall profits tax and stronger federal enforcement -- in partnership with the states -- of antitrust laws and other consumer protection measures."

Blumenthal's legislation, developed in coordination with and supported by State Rep. Christopher Stone, D-East Hartford, industry representatives and others, would:

- authorize comprehensive analysis of gasoline markets by state authorities;
- ban gasoline franchisors from prohibiting franchises offering cash discounts;

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- clarify the law to protect hundreds of consumers who lost their prepaid heating oil deposits in the F&S Oil debacle; and
- provide consumers with written contracts for heating oil or propane deliveries where additional charges are assessed by the company.

**“This measure could be approved by the legislature during the special session -- yielding timely, essential information on our gasoline markets and offering much needed consumer protections,” Blumenthal said. “Such real time, highly relevant information would aid law enforcement agencies like my office, and the public generally. Additional consumer protection measures could be considered as well, especially absent effective federal action and enforcement.”**

**In his letter to legislative leaders, Blumenthal said, “I understand reservations about opening the special session to additional issues, but this one is different. Our state faces an economic crisis. The legislature must quickly and effectively address the most important issue to the citizens of our state.”**

**Blumenthal has also advocated federal action to:**

- **Order an aggressive, comprehensive federal investigation, in partnership with the states to determine whether and how oil companies have misused monopolistic power - much as federal and state antitrust enforcers combined and cooperated in a similar investigation regarding Microsoft;**
- **Enact a one-year moratorium on oil industry mergers;**
- **Prohibit any oil company merger in a highly concentrated market unless the Federal Trade**
- **Commission (FTC) specifically finds consumers benefit from the merger;**
- **Increase federal regulation and oversight of the gasoline futures markets to end speculation that increases gasoline prices**
- **Stop adding to the National Petroleum Reserve while gasoline prices stay high;**
- **Ban zone pricing and other mechanisms that prevent gasoline retailers from obtaining gasoline at the best price;**
- **Expand refinery capacity and mandate minimum levels of inventory of a significant source of energy; and**
- **Lessen our dependency on gasoline through conservation efforts and alternative fuels.**

**\*\*\*END\*\*\***

