



**PROFESSIONAL  
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AGENTS**

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**STATEMENT RE:**                   **S-482**  
                                          "An Act concerning underground storage tanks, and  
                                          amending P.L. 1997, c.235.

**TO:**                                   Senate Environment Committee

**BY:**                                 Professional Insurance Agents of New Jersey  
                                          Leon Zimmerman, Legislative Representative

**ON:**                                 May 15, 2006

PIANJ, a trade association which represents more than 7,000 professional independent insurance agents and their employees doing business in communities throughout New Jersey, offers its support for this vital piece of legislation.

S-482 would authorize loans and grants to homeowners from the Petroleum Underground Storage Tank Remediation, Upgrade, and Closure Fund (UST Fund) for the closure and replacement of their underground home heating oil tanks. Allowing homeowners to access funds to close or replace their underground oil tanks will benefit all residents of our state by giving homeowners the financial ability to take corrective action before a damaging leak occurs.

Currently, the UST Fund only provides grants to homeowners with leaking underground heating oil tanks. Homeowners that wish to replace or remove a tank must foot the bill themselves. From a purely environmental standpoint, it makes sense to enable homeowners to close or replace a tank before a leak occurs. S-482 provides homeowners with the financial resources to take this preemptive action.

Additionally, many homeowners' insurance companies limit or exclude coverage for oil tank leaks, leaving homeowners' exposed to the risk for damages to their own property, as well as the property of others, should a leak occur. This is a substantial risk to which many homeowners with underground tanks are currently exposed. S-482 would allow homeowners the ability to eliminate the risk of an uninsured loss by giving them the financial resources to remove or replace their underground fuel tanks, before a leak occurs.

The legislation would also increase the current income and net worth eligibility caps for grants from the Fund, allowing more homeowners to obtain grants to remove their tanks.

For these reasons, PIANJ urges the committee to vote in favor of this important bill.  
Thank you.