

Washington – Today, Congressman John Olver (1st-MA) and Senator Edward Kennedy announced a \$3.9 million USDA loan guarantee for Co-op Plus of Western Massachusetts. "Maintaining local control of these companies is great news for our area," Olver said. Co-op Plus will acquire Express Oil of Southampton, Lacasse Heating and Cooling Services, and the Western Massachusetts Fuel Oil Company. "Not only will Co-op Plus provide stable rates for heating oil, the organization will eventually provide other services. Co-op Plus will begin by selling fuel oil and kerosene. In the long term, the cooperative will provide other services. Congressman Olver worked with Co-op Plus and the USDA to help secure the guarantee. Senator Kennedy said, "This federal support will protect 43 existing jobs and create new jobs. For more information about Co-op Plus, contact Tim Clegg, CEO, at (413) 538-8000.

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