

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 21, 2005

The Honorable Gail A. Norton
Secretary
The United States Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Norton:

As supporters of the recently enacted Energy Policy Act of 2005 (H.R. 6, Public Law 109-58), we respectfully request that you move ahead this winter heating season on the LIHEAP Royalty-In-Kind (RIK) program authorized in section 342(j) of the legislation.

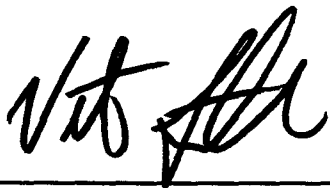
As you know, thousands of our low-income constituents in New York City are facing increased natural gas bills this winter resulting from Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Rita and other factors pushing up global energy prices.

On September 15, a representative of KeySpan, the gas utility serving our districts, met with Johnnie Burton, the Director of the Minerals Management Service (MMS) and her staff to present KeySpan's proposed New York City RIK pilot program under the energy legislation. Under the pilot, a producer with royalty-burdened gas will sell a portion of the gas at a discount to KeySpan which in turn will stream the discounted gas solely to its previously identified low-income customers, with the discount funded by royalties otherwise due the federal government. The new RIK assistance would supplement and not supplant existing LIHEAP assistance in our districts. We understand that MMS is also considering a one-time sale of royalty-burdened gas into the market as an alternative to the pilot program this winter.

We appreciate MMS' long-term interest in the RIK program during consideration of the energy legislation over the years and its willingness to meet with KeySpan only a few weeks after the President approved the bill. We hope that MMS and KeySpan can continue to work together crafting a program assisting our constituents this winter.

Please keep us apprised of the progress on the New York City RIK effort. Thank you again for your interest in the LIHEAP RIK program.

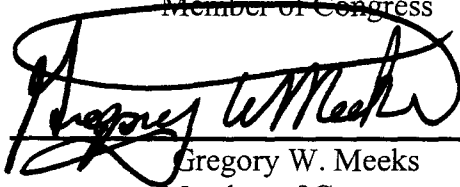
Sincerely,



Vito Fossella
Member of Congress



Edlophus Towns
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress