

## Maine faces home heating oil crisis

by UPI

AUGUSTA, Maine -- Needy families in Maine face a crisis in paying for home heating oil as state aid is running low enough to invoke calls for private donations. Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, requested the audience of representatives from several social service agencies to address the fuel assistance needs of Main residents, the Bangor (Maine) Daily News reported Sunday. A representative with the Salvation Army said many people are in an emergency situation when it comes to home heating oil supplies, believing it to be a matter of weeks before tanks run dry and families have no money to fill them. "We're seeing more and more requests from the working poor, people who work more than 40 hours a week and still can't pay their bills," said Nathalie Perry, director of Brewer Health and Human Services. Collins is seeking to secure additional aid on top of the \$7.2 million in contingency aid already allocated. "Unfortunately, there is no easy answer to the problem of rising oil and gas prices. This will require a combination of short-term and long-term actions," Collins said.

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