

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2005

The Honorable Ralph Regula  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David R. Obey  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

We are writing to urge you to increase funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to the highest level possible in the Labor, Health and Human Services Conference Agreement for fiscal year 2006. Currently, the House has funded LIHEAP at \$2.006 billion for regular state block grants and the Senate has funding the program at \$1.883 billion for regular state block grants and \$300 million for contingency funding. Both levels fall far short of the needs this coming winter and year.

The destruction caused by this year's hurricane season is rippling across our economy, generating significant increases in energy prices. With the winter just around the corner many cold-weather states are bracing for what could be the most expensive heating season in history. Based on the Energy Information Administration's most recent Short-Term Energy Outlook,

*On average, households heating primarily with natural gas likely will spend \$306 (41 percent) more for fuel this winter than last winter. Households heating primarily with heating oil can expect to pay, on average, \$325 (27 percent) more this winter than last. Households heating primarily with propane can expect to pay, on average, \$230 (21 percent) more this winter than last... Should colder weather prevail, expenditures could be significantly higher.*

For many low-income families, disabled individuals and senior citizens living on fixed incomes, these price increases will make home energy unaffordable.

Even prior to the damage this year's hurricane season caused our energy markets Congress recognized the vastly reduced purchasing power of this important program and increase the authorization from \$2 billion to \$5.1 billion in the newly enacted Energy Policy Act. We now find ourselves in an even more challenging situation. To ensure all our states are helped this program requires significantly more funding.

While we understand the budgetary constraints governing Conference negotiations, we encourage you to do whatever you can to fund this program at the highest level possible to expeditiously deliver this vital funding to the states before the arrival of severe winter weather. Funding LIHEAP at or below last

year's level (\$1.885 in regular state block grant funding and \$298 million for contingency funds) will prove perilously inadequate. Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Les Bradley  
Robert E. N

Bobby Lush  
Charles F. Bess

Tim Holden

Joseph Bradley  
John Brown

John M. Kelly  
John V. Hutchinson

Richard Shae

Michael R. McNulty

Donald W. Payne

Pat Duff

Bill Saul

Ch. Arden Ruppensberger

Barbara Lee

Thomas McCotter

Julia Carson  
Tom Spr

Michael Sitzpatrick

John A. LeBarto

Nancy Johnson

Louis M. Slaughter

Bart Slupak

Chris Smith

Jose C. Serrano

~~Walter Delo~~

Walter Delo

Ron Kind

Tony Baldwin

~~Tom Sawyer~~

Phil Engle

John

Shirley Jackson Lee

Bob Meyer

Jim Oberstar

Mr. Men

Ernie L. Enger

Dick Boucher

Dave Mc

McDonnell

John Schatz

Jim Tamm

Benny Bank

Eddie Benier Johnson

Randy Kuehl

John W. Oliver

Jim M. Bennett

Rush Holt

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Stephen Lynch

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John Smith

Carolyn McEnty

Jane Perry

Dana DeBette

Ben Chandler

Earl Perry

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Myer B. Davis

Tom Osborne

David Scott

Steve Jordan

Raul M. Hijalua

Leonard Samuel

Mrs Van Holler

Tom Allen

Billy McEllum

Edward J. Mackey

Ben Cook

Harry A. Weisman

Allen A. Green

Alto Hunt

Brent Biss

John King

John Meyer Jr.  
Robert Menendez

Bill Pascrell Jr

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