

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 26, 2012

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

As you know, Congress and the Administration confront challenging fiscal decisions in this difficult economic environment, and we recognize the need to work cooperatively to address our country's deficit in a manner that promotes job growth, economic recovery and support for the most vulnerable Americans. It is in this spirit that we write to encourage the Administration to fund the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in the budget request for FY2013 at least at the FY2011 appropriated level of \$4.7 billion.

LIHEAP is the main federal program that helps low-income households and seniors with their energy bills, providing vital assistance during both the cold winter and hot summer months. The number of households eligible for the program continues to vastly exceed those receiving assistance, and this funding remains a lifeline during the economic downturn while energy costs continue to rise. LIHEAP helps to ensure that people do not have to choose between paying their energy bills and paying for food or medicine. Moreover, the funds invested in LIHEAP help to stimulate the economy, generating \$1.13 in economic activity for every dollar in benefits paid, according to economists Mark Zandi and Alan S. Blinder.

Americans continue to face challenging times. The U.S. Census recently reported that 46.2 million people lived in poverty in 2010, the largest number in the 52 year history of published poverty estimates. In addition, according to the National Energy Assistance Director's Association, last year LIHEAP provided vital heating assistance to 8.9 million households, an increase of 54 percent since 2008. Even more striking is that the number of households that include service veterans increased by more than 150 percent during the same period. Overall, the number of veterans' households served by LIHEAP has increased from about 700,000 in FY 2008 to 1.78 million in FY 2011, which represents an increase to approximately 20 percent of total LIHEAP recipients.

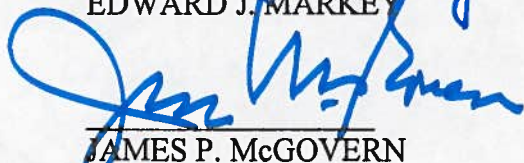
We understand the fiscal challenges we face as a nation. Nevertheless, we ask that the Administration's FY13 budget request for LIHEAP is at least as much as the \$4.7 billion provided in FY11 so that the neediest Americans are not left out in the cold.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

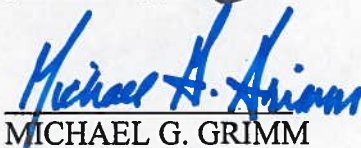

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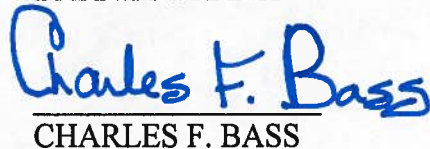

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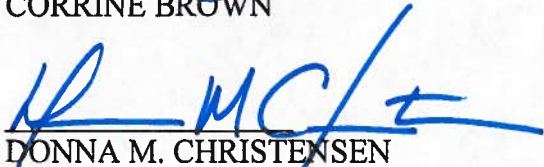

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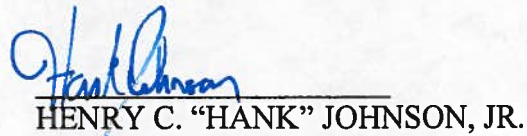

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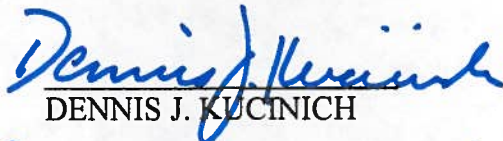

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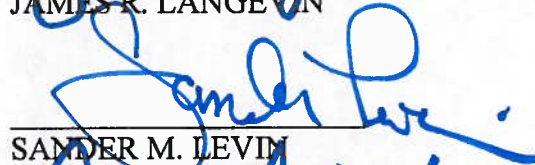

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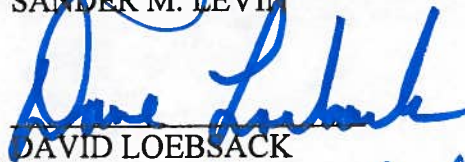

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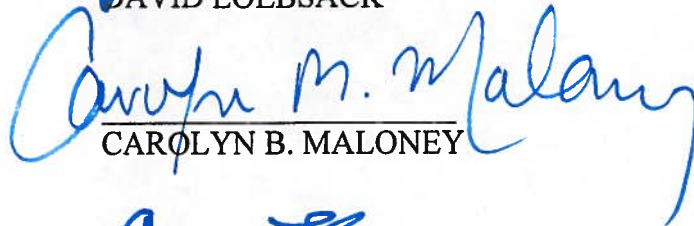

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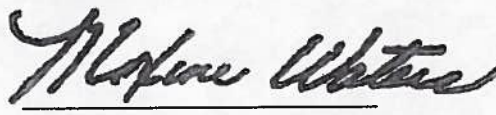
Paul Tonko
PAUL TONKO

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EDOLPHUS TOWNS

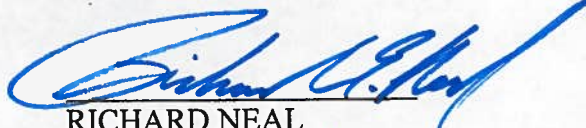

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MAXINE WATERS

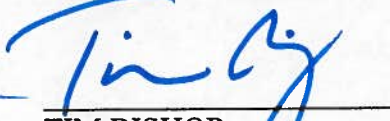

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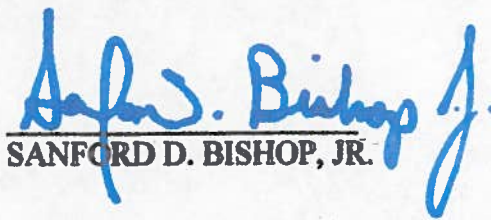

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