



National Fuel Funds Network

1010 Vermont Ave., NW, #718

Washington, DC 20005

202 824-0638 (fax), 202 824-0660 (phone)

info@nationalfuelfunds.org www.nationalfuelfunds.org

February 14, 2011

LIHEAP Action Tool Kit

Help Fight Proposed Cuts to LIHEAP: A Media Strategy

We are facing a difficult struggle to maintain the current funding level (\$5.1 billion) for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

President Obama's FY 2012 budget calls for a 50 percent reduction in LIHEAP funding providing only \$2.57 billion, \$1.98 billion in base grants and \$590 million in contingency funds, for the program. The president's proposal would leave as many as 4.5 million households or 180 million Americans without energy assistance.

The Republican majority in the House of Representatives plan to make cuts to the program's funding for the current fiscal year and FY 2012. Funding for the current fiscal year runs out March 4, and the Republicans have introduced a bill that would reduce contingency funding by \$400 million for the rest of the fiscal year.

As LIHEAP supporters, we must act swiftly to head off what could be devastating cuts to the program. We must let the decision makers in Washington understand the drastic impact the proposed cuts would have on the lives of millions of Americans. We must act now.

The House will begin action on a new continuing resolution to fund the government through the end of this fiscal year this week. The current continuing resolution expires March 4, slightly more than two weeks away. The proposed legislation would reduce LIHEAP funding from \$5.1 billion to \$4.7 billion. Work on the FY 2012 budget will begin after that.

Here's what you can do:

- Contact your governor, members of your state legislature, your mayor and elected city officials and ask them to go public with their support for LIHEAP.

- Hold a news conference in your community. Invite LIHEAP providing agencies, utilities, local government officials and LIHEAP recipients to participate. Over the past year, NFFN has worked with many local coalitions to organize news events. If you are interested in organizing a local press conference, please contact NFFN Executive Director George Coling, 202-824-0660, coling@nationalfuelfunds.org, to obtain examples of earlier news conferences and other assistance.
- Visit with your newspaper's editorial board. Contact the editorial writers at the newspaper and set up a meeting to discuss LIHEAP.
- Submit a "letter to the editor" or an op-ed piece to your local newspaper. The NFFN will provide drafts of a "letter to the editor" or an opinion piece for your use.
- Visit the District offices of your Representative and Senators and talk with staff about the importance of LIHEAP. Congress will recess next week, and the members will be in their home districts.
- Contact your Congressional delegation. Click on the following link to send a message of support for LIHEAP to your Representative and Senators:
<http://capwiz.com/aga/utr/1/HUWMOQRASP/ISXMOQYVPD/6460653656>.
- Visit the NFFN's Facebook page for up-dates on the funding situation and information on other planned actions. Use social networking sites to spread the word about the potential cuts to LIHEAP.