

NATIONAL FUEL FUNDS
NETWORK

Toolkit for
**National Fuel Funds Network's
National Action for LIHEAP
March 23 — April 9, 2010**



NATIONAL FUEL FUNDS NETWORK

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What's NFFN's National Action for LIHEAP?

What's in the Tool Kit?

The National Action for LIHEAP Tool Kit is designed to help you participate to the fullest in this important undertaking. The kit contains links to data and statistical information on LIHEAP as well as suggestions and ideas to help you organize events in your community.

Retooling To Delivery Our Message

Due to the historic snowfalls in Washington, the National Fuel Funds Network (NFFN) cancelled its LIHEAP Action Day, scheduled for February 10, 2010. The need for a strong national event to kick off 2010 grassroots lobbying remains. Consequently, NFFN will conduct **National Action for LIHEAP, March 23 – April 9, 2010.**

The NFFN has a three-fold message for the National Action for LIHEAP.

LIHEAP needs \$2.5 billion in supplemental funding for this year;

LIHEAP should be funded at \$7.6 billion for FY 2011; and

The NFFN supports the Markey bill (H.R. 4554) reauthorizing LIHEAP and increasing funding authority to \$7.6 billion.

The NFFN Board of Directors, meeting in Detroit on March 23, will hold a press conference to release the contents of a letter from the organization to the Congressional leadership. NFFN encourages its members to conduct their own press events, highlighting the need for additional LIHEAP funding, during the National Action for LIHEAP.

The NFFN staff can provide supporting material for members holding press events. We welcome the initiative of any NFFN members to organize an event in your locale. Please email coling@nationalfuelfunds.org to indicate your interest, and we will respond promptly with more information.

Additionally, NFFN asks our members and allies to:

- ◆ arrange meetings with Congressional delegations during the March 29-April 4 Home District Work Period
- ◆ share information on the positive impact of recent increases in LIHEAP funding
- ◆ organize other grassroots activities, as appropriate, using the *NFFN Toolkit for the National Action for LIHEAP* for suggestions.

The Network asks supporters to display a message supporting additional funding for LIHEAP as their status on their *Facebook* pages at a certain time during the last week in March. If you don't currently have a *Facebook* page, we urge you to open one before National Action for LIHEAP begins.



Here's What the NFFN has Planned

The NFFN Board of Directors will hold a news conference in Detroit on March 23, 2010 to release the contents of a letter to the Congressional leadership asking for the Congress to approve \$2.5 billion in additional funding for LIHEAP for this year.

In addition, the Board will ask the Congress to provide \$7.6 billion in funding for LIHEAP for FY 2011.

What you can do to participate in the National Action for LIHEAP

Hold a news conference of your own. The NFFN will coordinate with its members to help them hold news conferences in their communities. Our goal is to get as many media hits as possible with the message that LIHEAP needs additional funds for this year.

Visit Congressional District offices. Both House and Senate members will be working in their home districts from March 29 through April 9. This is a perfect opportunity to meet with them and explain in detail the importance of LIHEAP in your community.

Stage an activity that heightens awareness of LIHEAP.

We will rush multiple copies of NFFN'S "LIHEAP Saves Lives Bookmarks" to you. The bookmarks are a simple reference guide to LIHEAP advocacy meant for mass distribution.

For those wishing to thank legislators for LIHEAP support, we will rush you quantities of post cards designed for clients or individuals to send to Senators and Representatives in Washington.

Please keep NFFN informed about activities you organize.



SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

Create a “District/State Action Day for LIHEAP”

Partner with local fuel funds, utilities, energy marketers, fuel oil companies, social service providers, weatherization programs.

Invite:

- ◆ Local/District Congressional staff.
- ◆ Local legislative representatives, state, county, and city representatives, public utility commissioners, etc.
- ◆ Energy assistance recipients.
- ◆ Other low-income advocates, such as housing programs, hunger advocates, etc. Ask them to talk about the link between hunger or housing and the need for energy assistance.
- ◆ Include the media

Schedule appointments with local Congressional offices

Provide accurate information. Make it relevant, short, and easy to reference. Keep written materials to one page. You may provide additional background material with your main message, but don't leave reams of paper. Include your contact information. Another option is to let staff know what kind of resources you have available should they need them. The appointment is especially important if your Senator or Representative is a member of one of the Appropriations Subcommittees that consider LIHEAP funding. NFFN will distribute rosters of the Subcommittees' memberships.

Sponsor a “Call-in-Event”

Distribute flyers to staff, Boards of Directors, coalition members, and clients with phone numbers to your local congressional office or provide cell phones to call Washington DC legislators' offices.



SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:

Petition Campaign

Ask your staff, Boards of Directors, coalition members, clients and other citizens to sign petitions asking for increased funding and advanced appropriations. Personally deliver them to local Congressional offices if possible. Mail copies to your Senator and Representative's offices in Washington, your Governor and the White House.

A sample petition can be obtained from the NFFN offices. Email your request to info@nationalfuelfunds.org.

Media Events

- ◆ Meet with the editorial staff of your local newspaper to explain the LIHEAP program and seek media support.
- ◆ Write an op-ed piece.
- ◆ Host a press conference.
- ◆ Consider purchasing paid advertising in local media.

Social Networking

The Network asks supporters to display a message supporting additional funding for LIHEAP as their status on their *Facebook* pages at a certain time during the last week in March. If you don't currently have a *Facebook* page, we urge you to open one before National Action for LIHEAP begins.

NFFN will use its *Facebook* page, as well as email alerts, to promote the National Action for LIHEAP. We encourage members to take photos of actions and meetings with legislators and write about them for distribution on *Facebook* and at www.nationalfuelfunds.org.



For more information:

National Fuel Funds Network

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Congress

To find your Senator:	www.senate.gov
To find your Representative:	www.house.gov
House/Senate switchboard	202-224-3121

The President

White House
Washington, DC 20500
Phone 202-456-1414; Fax: 202-456-2461

Campaign for Home Energy Assistance
202-331-2962
www.liheap.org

LIHEAP Clearinghouse
888-294-8662
www.ncat.org/liheap

National Energy Assistance Director's Association
(NEADA)
202-237-5199
www.neada.org

Office of Energy Assistance, USDHHS
202-401-9352
www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/liheap



Additional Resources:

- ◆ The **Edison Electric Institute** has prepared a collection of advocacy tools for use in planning for the NFFN's LIHEAP Action Day. These tools include an audio file with tips on scheduling Congressional meetings; a draft press release; and a draft thank you letter to members of Congress. To view the file click on the link. <http://www.eei.org/whatwedo/PublicPolicyAdvocacy/FedLegislation/LIHEAP/Pages/Advocacy.aspx>.
- ◆ The **National Energy Assistance Directors Association** has data on the number of households receiving LIHEAP aid and a state by state breakdown of LIHEAP funding. Visit the NEADA website at <http://www.neada.org>.
- ◆ The **Campaign For Home Energy Assistance** has produced "*2010 State LIHEAP Fact Sheets*" to provide to offices on hill visits. The state fact sheets include the funding levels (FY2008-2010), number of households served, and demographics of each state. These fact sheets can be an effective resource in demonstrating to Congressional office the investment and impact that the program is making at the state level. These profiles can be found at <http://www.liheap.org/factsheet.html> (*FY2010 will be updated on the Campaign's website by 2/4/10*).

If you have trouble downloading these sheets or have questions regarding the data, contact Brandon Avila (202) 331-2962.

- ◆ [Energy Insecurity is a Major Threat to Child Health](#) is a policy action brief prepared by Children's HealthWatch. The brief deals with the impact of LIHEAP grants on children's health.

