

The Honorable
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C., 20515

Dear Rep.

I am writing on behalf of **(insert your organization's name)** to ask you to support efforts to provide \$2.5 billion in supplemental funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program for the current fiscal year.

The brutal weather of this winter has resulted in unusually high home energy bills. While these bills are a problem for many households, they present a particularly difficult burden for those with low incomes or fixed incomes. And the prospect of a hot summer threatens to exacerbate the cost of cooling homes across the country to a safe level.

The nation's current economic situation only makes the problem worse. Here in **(insert name of state)**, the unemployment rate is **(numbers are available through the Bureau of Labor Statistics website www.bls.gov/lau/)**.

Because of the increased utility costs and slow economic recovery, demand for LIHEAP assistance is at an all time high. In our state **(insert number of LIHEAP recipients and other LIHEAP data from the NEADA website <http://www.neada.org/communications/press/2010-02-22Table%201-LIHEAP10ProjServed.pdf>)** households have received assistance this winter, an increase of **(insert LIHEAP data)** percent. **(If you have information about your local situation insert it here)** And still LIHEAP provides aid to less than one out of every five eligible households.

More funds are needed now and the situation will not get better. I ask that you act immediately to provide much needed funds for this fiscal year.

Additionally, I ask that you support the current request to appropriators in the House to increase LIHEAP appropriations from the President's request for \$3.3 billion to \$5.1 billion, the FY 2010 level. And we will support any similar efforts in the Senate. But this increase is not enough, given the circumstances described above. Accordingly, we ask you to vote in favor of increasing funding for LIHEAP to \$7.6 billion for FY 2011.

The need is there. People are struggling. No American should have to choose between keeping their home livable or feeding their family. No senior citizen or person with a disability should have to choose between medication or utility bills.

We urge you to move swiftly to address this crisis situation.

Sincerely yours,