



National Fuel Funds Network

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June 27, 2008

Energy Safety Net Bulletin #126

Dear Member: The National Energy Affordability and Utility Conference in Denver last week drew over 700 participants. The National Fuel Funds Network and the National Low Income Energy Consortium co-presented a program of 62 workshops, 12 hot topics round tables and seven general sessions. Denver mayor John Hickenlooper, former Senator Gary Hart, and Kateri Callahan, President of the Alliance to Save Energy were among the plenary speakers. Visit

www.energyandutilityconference.org/2008%20Conference/2008%20Overview.htm for selected PowerPoint presentations and conference photos. The site will have a recap soon, and the Network's 3rd quarter issue of *National Energy Assistance Report* will have further information.



With the conclusion of the highly successful national conference last week, there are now three more major NFFN events that you need to add to your calendars.

On **September 16 and 17** at the Tremont Plaza Hotel in Baltimore, the NFFN will convene the ***Victorine Q. Adams Institute***, the first and only program focused exclusively on fundraising for charitable energy assistance.

The NFFN has put together two days of presentations, discussions and workshops for this first in-depth forum for both improving current practices and developing new

fundraising strategies in these volatile times. The **Institute's** program will address fundraising issues of both nonprofit and utility members and of both large and small fuel funds. It will provide peer-to-peer training for those new to the field and for those with many years' experience, for mature programs and start up fuel funds.

To view the exciting program schedule and to register, please visit <http://www.nationalfuelfunds.org/Whatshappening/VQAINstitute.html>.

On **February 10, 2009**, the NFFN will celebrate its 25th anniversary with a gala dinner dance at the Washington Marriott Hotel. The **Gala** will commemorate the history of the organization recounting its growth and development and honor NFFN leaders and visionaries of the past and present.

In addition, there will be the opportunity for parties to offer their tributes and observations in the 25th anniversary commemorative book.

More information about this celebration of our history and the commemorative book will be available soon at www.nationalfuelfunds.org.

Last but definitely not least, **February 11, 2009** is the date for the seventh annual **NFFN Washington Action Day for LIHEAP**. **Washington Action Day** is the only national grassroots lobbying effort solely on behalf of the federally funded energy assistance program.

Next year, **Washington Action Day** will be more important than ever because there will be many newly elected members of the House and Senate, who may know little or nothing about LIHEAP. **Washington Action Day** will be our opportunity to educate the new members about this vital program.

You can register for **Washington Action Day** on our website at www.nationalfuelfunds.org.

So mark your calendars, plan to come to Baltimore for the **Victorine Q. Adams Institute** in September and to Washington on February 10th for the **Gala** and stay for **Washington Action Day**.

LIHEAP

- On June 26, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved legislation funding the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program for FY 2009 including a provision directing the Bush Administration to immediately release \$120 million of the programs funds for FY 2008.

The amendment was offered by Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and passed by voice vote with no dissent. According to Leahy the release of the LIHEAP funds will provide immediate relief for many households struggling with high home energy bills.

The bill also includes \$2.57 billion for LIHEAP for FY 2009, the same as for FY 2008 and a \$500 million increase over the president's proposal for FY 2009.

In the House, the appropriations bill is stalled in committee. The House version contains about \$2.77 billion for LIHEAP for the next fiscal year.

NFFN Leadership

- At a June 16 meeting, the NFFN Board of Directors voted to install Sue Montgomery Corey of the Community Power Network of New York State as board chairperson. She replaces Greg Sawyers of Citizens Gas & Coke, who will remain on the board's executive committee.

Three new members whom NFFN members elected to the board in the spring began service at the June 16 meeting. The new board members are Jacqueline Hutchinson of the Human Development Corporation of St. Louis, John Rich of the Mid America Assistance Coalition in Kansas City, and Wilma Sims-Moore of the American Red Cross in Birmingham.

The board also thanked two retiring board members Julie Arnestad of Tacoma Public Utilities and Kansas City Council Member Jan Marcason for their service.

State Government Actions

- Maine Governor John Baldacci has given his cabinet and staff until the middle of July to come up with recommendations to deal with the growing energy crisis. In addition, the governor is convening a meeting of New England governors on July 9 and 10 to discuss regional approaches to the problem.

Baldacci has reactivated the Pre-emergency Energy Assistance Task Force which will look at short term issues of both price and availability. The group will review potential programs that range from cleaning and tuning furnaces for low-income residents to a fundraising effort to supplement the LIHEAP program. The task force is to make recommendations by July 15.

Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri has signed a \$6.9 billion budget plan for the state that eliminated a two year old program aimed at helping low income families pay their utility bills. The budget plan, which featured program cuts to close a \$422 million spending shortfall, will save \$4.2 million in FY 2009, \$8.6

million in FY 2010, \$13.1 million in FY 2011, \$17.8 million in FY 2012, and \$18.5 million in FY 2013 by ending the energy assistance program according to the House Finance Committee.

Utility Actions

- The Long Island Power Authority Board of Trustees has approved the creation of a \$10 million fund aimed at low-income senior citizens struggling to pay their electric bills. “The number one request that comes across my desk since taking over LIPA is from senior citizens on fixed incomes begging for rate relief,” said LIPA President and CEO Kevin S. Law. “Given the staggering rise in oil and natural gas prices and a sluggish economy, lowering rates for everyone is simply unrealistic. But whatever help I can extend to our low-income senior population to help ease the burden is worth the effort.”