



## *National Fuel Funds Network*

1010 Vermont Ave., NW, #718  
Washington, DC 20005  
202 824-0638 (fax), 202 824-0660 (phone)

[info@nationalfuelfunds.org](mailto:info@nationalfuelfunds.org) [www.nationalfuelfunds.org](http://www.nationalfuelfunds.org)

November 28, 2007

### **Energy Safety Net Bulletin #116**

Dear Member: Funding for LIHEAP continues at last year's level following a failed attempt to override President Bush's veto of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill.

A continuing resolution, which will expire in mid-December, currently provides funding for the program while Democratic Congressional leaders weigh different scenarios for completing action on several appropriations bills.

Congress has approved legislation that is \$22 billion more than the President has indicated he will accept. One plan being discussed on Capitol Hill calls for a bill that would split the difference with the White House and send the president legislation that is about \$11 billion more than the Administration's position.

It was not immediately clear how this plan would impact LIHEAP funding but Rep. David Obey, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, said the plan could result in the loss of \$315 million in LIHEAP funding.

We will continue to monitor the situation and will inform you of new developments.

#### **LIHEAP**

- The House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor Subcommittee for Children and Families held an oversight hearing on LIHEAP and heard testimony supporting increased funding for the program from several organizations including the National Energy Assistance Directors Association (NEADA) and the American Gas Association.

The NFFN, in a statement submitted to the subcommittee, explained the need for additional funding for LIHEAP and the role played by fuel funds in helping to fill the gap between federal funding and the actual need for assistance.

The NFFN statement is available on the NFFN website and the other statements also well as a webcast of the hearing can be found on the subcommittee's website – <http://edlabor.house.gov/hearings/hfc111307.shtml>.

### **Fuel Fund Actions**

- The Salvation Army began its annual winter fund raising drive for its Rhode Island Good Neighbor Energy Fund with a breakfast attended by Governor Carcieri, Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, and Public Utilities Commission Chairman Ella Germani. The goal for this year's drive is \$600,000.
- The Kissimmee Utility Authority used pumpkin pies as a means of raising funds for its Good Neighbor Energy Fund. The community owned utility sold pies during the Taste of Osceola, an annual food tasting event hosted by the Kissimmee/Osceola County Chamber of Commerce.

The pie sales raised \$584 which was matched by the utility for a total of \$1,168 for the event. The Good Neighbor Energy Fund provides assistance to customers who are experiencing temporary financial difficulties.

### **Weatherization Day Activities**

- Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius issued a proclamation making October 30<sup>th</sup> "Kansas Weatherization Day." The governor said "The best defense against rising energy costs is a weatherized and well-insulated house. By providing a few cost-effective energy conservation measures, the Weatherization Assistance Program can help families save money on energy bills."

Last year, the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation distributed \$6.6 million in weatherization funds from the US Department of Energy, the Kansas Warm Homes Project and the Low Income Energy Assistance Program.

- In Illinois, ComEd marked National Weatherization Day by announcing plans to use \$4 million from its rate relief and assistance initiative to provide energy makeovers to customers who heat with electricity and are approved by the state's weatherization office.

The utility kicked off the initiative by making over 164 units in a senior citizen complex in Downers Grove. The make-overs included the installation of new

insulation, caulking, weather-stripping, energy efficient lighting, Energy Star refrigerators and other measures.

### **State Government Actions**

- Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick has signed legislation providing \$15 million in state funds to supplement the federal energy assistance program. The governor had introduced the legislation to help state residents deal with increasing home energy costs.

The governor said the funds would help pay for the unpaid debts of recipients. "The \$15 million ...largely enables us to assure that there are not cutoffs," Patrick said.

The state legislature is also scheduled to consider a bill that would provide \$3.9 million in energy assistance funds for war veterans and their dependents.

### **Energy Hog**

- The Energy Hog, the Ad Council's super hero for energy efficiency, made an appearance in Baton Rouge, LA, where the mayor proclaimed Oct. 30 "Energy Efficiency Day." The Energy Hog and his nemesis the Energy Hog Buster visited several classrooms at the Baton Rouge Center for Visual and Performing Arts.

### **Resources**

- The New York Times on November 24<sup>th</sup> ran an excellent article on the problems being faced this winter by the poor and elderly in Maine. The story can be viewed by using this link --  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/24/us/24maine.html?pagewanted=2&ei=5070&en=4a911e8adf2c765a&ex=1196571600&emc=eta1>.