

**An Open Letter Appeal to the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives,
to Continue Funding the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
at \$5.1 Billion in Fiscal Year 2011**

November 16, 2010

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators and Representatives,

As you prepare to fund the government into FY2011, we wish to bring to your attention a potentially catastrophic situation involving the operation of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and to urge that the Congress adopt the FY2011 recommendations of the House appropriators for LIHEAP. The House bill would level funding of LIHEAP at \$5.1 billion for FY2011, the same amount as provided in FY2010. In comparison, the Senate bill would provide \$3.3 billion, requiring a cut of three million households from the program. In order to pay their energy bills, many of these families would have to choose between paying for food, medicine and other necessities. The House bill would prevent many of these families from having to make these choices.

The Senate bill is premised upon an automatic “trigger” provision proposed by the Administration. If that trigger is eventually enacted, LIHEAP would be funded at \$5.3 billion next year; however, this provision cannot take effect without signing new authorizing legislation into law—therefore, the “missing” \$2 billion represents an unexpected, inadvertent cut to a critical program. At this time, the requisite “trigger” legislation has not been introduced in either the House or the Senate. It is thus unlikely that this Congress has time to legislate on this matter. If the next Congress opts to address this issue, it may not occur until long after the winter heating season.

LIHEAP has evolved into a widely supported, essential program that delivers critical short-term aid to our most vulnerable neighbors, including elderly on fixed incomes and the desperately poor. In the last two fiscal years, the LIHEAP program was funded at the \$5.1 billion level. This strong bipartisan funding commitment allowed LIHEAP to grow from a primarily regional program to a national one.

The number of households receiving assistance reached record levels for this year, increasing from 7.7 million to 8.8 million. Even though Congress funded LIHEAP at the \$5.1 billion level, that amount was still only enough to assist one in five eligible Americans.

At this writing, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS and Education has provided \$5.1 billion for FY2011. The Senate Appropriations Committee has provided \$3.3 billion for LIHEAP. Thus, unless conferees adopt the \$5.1 billion in LIHEAP funding envisioned by House appropriators for next year, states will be compelled to implement painful, 35 percent reductions in less than three weeks. More than 3 million very low income otherwise-eligible households (or nearly 8 million Americans) could soon lose access to LIHEAP. Fortunately, this catastrophe can be averted by at least level-funding LIHEAP as House appropriators have proposed. We respectfully suggest that this remedy be applied to the Labor/HHS appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

A New Leaf’s Mesa Community Action Network
accessABILITY, inc.
Affordable Housing Alliance, Eatontown, NJ AGL
Resources

ALLETE
Alliant Energy Corp
Ameren Services
American Corn Growers Association

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American Gas Association	Action Agency
American Public Gas Association	Columbia Gas of Kentucky
American Public Power Association	Columbia Gas of Maryland
Arizona Community Action Association	Columbia Gas of Massachusetts
	Columbia Gas of Ohio
Arizona Public Service	Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania
Arkansas Community Action Agencies Assn., Inc.	Columbia Gas of Virginia
	Community Action Human Resources Agency
Arkansas Propane Gas Association	Community Action Organization of Scioto County, OH
Atlantic City Electric	Community Action Partnership of North Idaho
Atmos Energy Corp	Community Action Partnership of Oregon
	Community Care Outreach, Inc.
Avista Corp	Community Service Programs of West AL
Baltimore Jewish Council	Community Services League, Independence, MO
Berkshire Community Action Council	Con Edison
Black Hills Energy	Connecticut Association for Community Action
Black Hills Power	Connecticut Natural Gas Corporation
BROC-Community Action in Southwestern Vermont	Connecticut Office of Consumer Counsel
California/Nevada Community Action Partnership	Constellation Energy
Campaign for Home Energy Assistance	Consumer Action of California
Cape May County Office of Disability Services	DC Office of People's Counsel
CEDA, Chicago, IL	Delmarva Power
C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation, Effingham, IL	Dominion
Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corporation	DTE Energy
Cheyenne Light	Duke Energy
Children's HealthWatch	Eastern Idaho Community Action Partnership
Citizens Action Coalition of Indiana	Edison Electric Institute
	Elk Grove Township, IL
Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board (Kansas)	Energen Corp
Clearwater Gas System	Energy Outreach Colorado
Cleco Corporation	Entergy
CMS Energy	Equitable Gas Company
Coalition for Affordable Energy for All	Exelon Corporation
Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities in Illinois	Faith Works PAvillion
Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm	Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund
Coconino County Community Services, Community	FirstEnergy

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Florida Association for Community Action, Inc.	Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc., Remsen, IA
The Florida Council on Aging	MidAmerican Energy Holdings Company
Florida Power & Light Company	Minnesota Community Action Partnership
Fuel and Power	Minnesota Propane Association
Genesee Fuel & Heating Company	Missouri Association for Community Action
Hawaiian Electric	Missouri Gas Energy
	National Association of Oil Heating Service Managers
The Heat and Warmth Fund	National Association of State Energy Officials
Holy Spirit Hands, Maryland Heights, MO	National Association of State Utility Consumer
Human Development Corporation of St. Louis	Advocates
Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies	National Caucus and Center on Black Aged
Illinois Valley Economic Development Corporation	National Community Action Foundation
Independent Connecticut Petroleum Association	National Conference of State Legislatures
Indianapolis Jewish Community Relations Council	National Consumer Law Center, on behalf of its low-
Integrays Energy Group	income clients
Iowa Community Action Association	National Consumers League
Iowa Propane Gas Association	National Energy Assistance Directors' Association
Jacksonville (IL) Area Center for Independent Living	National Fuel Funds Network
Jewish Family Service	National Fuel Gas Company
Kansas City Power and Light	National Grange
Laclede Gas Company	National Grid
Lafayette Urban Ministry	National Hispanic Environmental Council
Louisiana Association of Community Action Partnership	National Propane Gas Association
Louisiana Propane Gas Association	National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
Lutheran Family and Children's Services of Missouri	New England Fuel Institute
MACEO	New Hampshire Community Action Association
Maine Community Action Association	New Jersey Natural Gas
Maine Office of Public Advocate	New Jersey Propane Gas Association
Maricopa County Board of Supervisors	New Jersey SHARES
Maryland Office of People's Counsel	New York Oil Heating Association
Massachusetts Energy Directors Association	New York State Community Action Association, Inc.
Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.	Nicor Gas
Michigan Electric and Gas Association	NIPSCO
Michigan Petroleum Association	North Carolina Community Action Association
Michigan Propane Gas Association	Northeast Missouri Community Action Agency
Mid Atlantic Propane Gas Association	Northeast Utilities System
Mid-County Church of Christ, Webster Groves, MO	NorthWestern
Mid Michigan Community Action	

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NW Natural Gas	South Eastern Arizona Community Action Program
Ohio Partners for Affordable Energy	South Carolina Propane Gas Association
OIC of Washington	Southeastern Association of Community Action Agencies
Ohio Propane Gas Association	Southern California Gas Company
Oil Heat Council of New Hampshire	Southern Company
Oil Heat Institute of Long Island	Southern Connecticut Gas Company
Omaha Public Power District	Southern New Hampshire Services
Operation Fuel	Southwest Gas Corporation
Operation: New View Community Action Agency	St. Sabina's Love in Action
Pennsylvania Propane Gas Association	Saint Vincent de Paul Conference at Sacred Heart Church, Valley Park, MO
Peoples Natural Gas Co.	Saint Vincent de Paul Center, Chicago, IL
Pepco	Saint Vincent de Paul Society, Festus, MO
Petroleum Marketing Association of America	Saint Vincent de Paul Society, Belmar, NJ
PG&E	Saint Vincent de Paul Society, Willingboro, NJ
Phoenix Family Housing	Sunshine Oil Company
Piedmont Natural Gas	Tri-County Community Action Commission of Champaign, Logan, & Shelby Counties, OH
Platte County Senior Fund, Kansas City, MO	TXU Energy
Portland General Electric	Tucson Electric Power
PPL	Unisource Energy Corporation
Propane Gas Association of New England	United Service Community Action Agency, Kansas City, MO
Propane Marketers Association of Kansas	Vectren Corporation
Prosperity Works	Vermont Gas Systems, Inc
PSEG	Virginia Propane Gas Association
Pueblo of Jemez Health & Human Service, Senior Citizens/Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program	Washington Gas
Puget Sound Energy	Washington State Community Action Partnership
Resources for Independent Living	Website Supplied Access News Association, Oak Park IL
RetireSafe	West Virginia Propane Gas Association
Rhode Island Community Action Association	Western Arizona Council of Governments
Salt River Project	Western Propane Gas Association
Salvation Army	Westmoreland Community Action
San Diego Gas & Electric	Weststar Energy
SEMCO Energy	Wisconsin Energy Corporation
Seniors Assistance Center, Norridge, IL	
Social Development Commission, Milwaukee, WI	
Sources Community Network Services	

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World Institute on Disability

Xcel Energy

Hon. Marian B. Tasco, Majority Leader, City Council
of Philadelphia and Chairwoman, Philadelphia Gas
Commission