The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a critical, life-saving program that targets and serves the most vulnerable — older Americans, individuals with disabilities, and children. The majority of these families and individuals survive on less than $20,000 per year; many are on fixed incomes. Their pay does not increase when the cost of heating and cooling their homes increases.

LIHEAP is a lifeline for these families. LIHEAP protects people from dying of cold or heat exposure in their own homes, keeps electricity flowing to life-saving home medical equipment, and ensures that children do not have to complete their homework in the dark. LIHEAP prevents disconnection of service, helps families maintain safe and stable housing, and restores dignity by helping customers pay bills in full and on time.

Our request to you...

Please support a funding appropriation of $5.1 billion for LIHEAP in FY 2023 to address energy poverty.

Also:

♦ Support the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services efforts in each state to streamline LIHEAP, mine existing flexibility, and strengthen outreach to eligible families.

♦ Continue to look for ways to robustly fund energy and utility assistance, and support state and local agencies in collaborating for effective delivery of available resources.
THE CASE FOR LIHEAP

Protect the vulnerable, address humanitarian needs for energy access

Energy remains unaffordable for many Americans

- The average limited-income household’s energy burden is three times that of other households.
- For families with annual incomes of less than $35,000, more than half reported they reduced or went without medicine or food in order to pay an energy bill at least once in the last year.
- Nearly 2 million homes were estimated to be disconnected from energy in 2021.

LIHEAP protects those most vulnerable from extreme heat and cold

- 27,000 children were lifted out of poverty because of LIHEAP in 2020.
- Three out of 10 households receiving LIHEAP used their kitchen stove to heat their home at least once in the past year. LIHEAP helps families avoid dangerous heating practices in winter.
- One in four households receiving LIHEAP could not afford to address the non-functioning furnace or cooling system in their homes. LIHEAP helps repair and replace broken systems, keeping homes safe and energy efficient.
- Nine out of 10 LIHEAP households include a person vulnerable to temperature extremes because of age or disability. LIHEAP targets these households specifically for services.
- In 2021, Hurricane Ida led to 91 deaths across nine states. Winter Storm Uri killed 259 Americans and was the costliest U.S. natural disaster on record. The Pacific Northwest experienced the deadliest heat wave in the region’s history. LIHEAP promotes resiliency during weather-related disasters like hurricanes, floods, heat waves, and winter storms. LIHEAP saves lives.

Consistency is key in addressing energy insecurity

- The economic and health crises triggered by COVID-19 are ongoing for Americans with limited resources, many working on the front lines of the pandemic to ensure access to services for their communities.
- The American Rescue Plan infused $4.5 billion in supplemental LIHEAP funds, which expire September 30, 2022.
- The rising costs of energy and other resources are having an impact on affordability. Ongoing support is necessary to continue to address the serious implications of energy insecurity.