

## PROTECT LIHEAP IN 2021

### Tennessee By the Numbers

<p>Gross LIHEAP allocation to Tennessee in 2019</p> <p><b>\$65,651,305</b></p> <p>for utility payment assistance and home weatherization programs<sup>1</sup></p>	<p>Tennessee LIHEAP funding down</p> <p><b>8.93%</b></p> <p>from FY10 to FY19</p>
<p><b>622,582</b></p> <p># of households eligible for LIHEAP in Tennessee<sup>2</sup></p>	<p><b>114,329</b></p> <p># of low-income households that received LIHEAP in Tennessee in 2019</p>

Only 18.36% of the total eligible population in Tennessee received LIHEAP in 2019

**97.75%**

of LIHEAP recipients in Tennessee have at least one vulnerable member:



elderly over 60  
54.59%



disabled  
67.24%



child under 6  
19.53%

**Federal home heating/cooling assistance saves Tennessee lives.**

**NEUAC urges Congress to protect LIHEAP funding for FY21.**

## Why Protect LIHEAP Funding?

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides critical home heating and cooling help to millions of vulnerable American families. LIHEAP funding peaked when Congress appropriated \$5.1 billion for the program in FY09 and FY10. Since then, funding has fallen by more than one-third. Because of these cuts, one million fewer eligible households receive energy assistance, and average individual grants have been reduced.<sup>3</sup>

### **LIHEAP is not an entitlement.**

Unlike entitlement programs, LIHEAP is funded by the annual congressional appropriations process. While states set eligibility rates, federal statute limits household income to a maximum of 150 percent of the federal poverty guideline, or 60 percent of the state median income. For example, 150 percent of the FY20 poverty guideline for a family of three is \$31,995.<sup>4</sup> Most LIHEAP recipients earn much less than the maximum thresholds: the latest data show that a typical LIHEAP recipient household had a median income of 83.5 percent of the federal poverty guideline.<sup>5</sup>

### **The need for LIHEAP remains high.**

In 2018, the national poverty rate was 11.5 percent, and 38.1 million Americans lived in poverty.<sup>6</sup>

### **LIHEAP prioritizes vulnerable households.**

More than 90 percent of LIHEAP recipient households have at least one vulnerable person - a senior aged 60 or older, a child aged 18 or under, or an individual with a disability.<sup>7</sup>

### **LIHEAP makes the difference.**

The Federal Reserve found that nearly half of American families would struggle to pay for an emergency expense costing \$400.<sup>8</sup> LIHEAP frequently meets those exact short-term emergencies and can be the difference between making ends meet or not.

## Protect LIHEAP.

### Sources

1. FY10-19 Data, HHS; \*FY2019 reflects preliminary data pending final data validation
2. Eligible households, households served and vulnerable household statistics supplied from state reports and are preliminary for FY2019
3. NEADA Purchasing Power Table
4. <https://liheapch.acf.hhs.gov/tables/POP.htm>
5. HHS FY2017 Budget Justification [https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/olab/final\\_cj\\_2017\\_print.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/olab/final_cj_2017_print.pdf)
6. US Census Bureau: <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2019/demo/p60-266.html>
7. <https://neada.org/program-policy-reports/liheapsurvey/>
8. "Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households in 2015" <https://www.federalreserve.gov/2015-report-economic-well-being-us-households-201605.pdf>