

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Protects access to utilities and fuel

Support LIHEAP to ensure health and safety in American homes

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is one of the most critical components of the social safety net. The program provides heating and cooling assistance to households experiencing economic or medical crises, or otherwise vulnerable to unsafe indoor temperatures. LIHEAP is an exceptionally efficient and targeted program, with state block grants flowing to local agencies to eligible households on a short-term basis to prevent utility disconnections or provide assistance with the cost of heating and cooling homes.

The National Energy & Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC) along with our dedicated partners strongly urge Congress to provide adequate funding for LIHEAP in Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) in order to protect access to energy and fuel for families struggling with kitchen table budgets that are increasingly difficult to balance.

Current events support the need for LIHEAP

- **LIHEAP provides access to utility assistance during both deadly heat domes and winter freezes.** Extreme weather events are increasing in both frequency and intensity.
- **LIHEAP needs more funds to address life-critical cooling assistance.** Unusually hot summer temperatures have become more common across the contiguous 48 states in recent decades. As a result, the risk of heat-related deaths and illness is expected to increase.
- **LIHEAP keeps electricity flowing to respiratory and home health equipment.** Outdoor air quality alerts triggered by wildfires forced people indoors during the winter of 2025. For those suffering from chronic respiratory conditions, this can be a especially dangerous situation.

Our request to you...

Please protect seniors, children, those with disabilities and other vulnerable persons by maximizing FY26 LIHEAP appropriations at \$5.1 billion.

LIHEAP provides energy security for millions of households, ensures access to critical home heating and cooling, provides weatherization to improve home energy efficiency, addresses energy crises, and protects families in their own homes.



The Case for LIHEAP

Protect the vulnerable, address humanitarian needs for energy access

Energy access is crucial for household safety

- 17% of adults report having kept their home at a temperature that felt unsafe or unhealthy in the past year¹.
- The average limited-income household's energy burden is three times that of other households².
- Nearly 27% of Americans reduced or forwent basic expenses such as food and medicine so they could pay their energy bill in the last 12 months¹.
- One in six people have been unable to pay the full amount of their energy bill at least once in the past year¹.
- LIHEAP restored power or prevented disconnection 2,757,200 times in FY 2023³.

LIHEAP plays a vital role in protecting families

- 34,000 children were lifted out of poverty because of energy assistance in 2023⁴.
- 68,000 people age 65 or older were lifted out of poverty because of energy assistance in 2023⁴.
- In FY 2023, 60,818 homes were weatherized with LIHEAP funds, improving the health, safety, and affordability for those households⁵.
- Three out of 10 households receiving LIHEAP reported using their kitchen stove to heat their home at least once in the year preceding assistance. LIHEAP helps families avoid dangerous heating practices in winter⁶.
- One in four households receiving LIHEAP reported that they 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 efficient⁶.
- The need for year-round LIHEAP offerings is growing, especially the need for cooling assistance. In 2023, at least 2,325 people in the United States died from heat-related causes, a record high⁷. LIHEAP protects people from extreme heat and cold in their homes. LIHEAP saves lives.

Overcoming energy insecurity requires consistent efforts

- The rising costs of energy, fuel, and other resources are having an impact on affordability. Ongoing support is necessary to continue to address the serious implications of energy insecurity⁸.
- Year-round programming that includes both heating and cooling assistance is becoming increasingly necessary.
- Crisis presents a persistent and insidious state of emergency for LIHEAP families. Consistent and comprehensive funding ensures families maintain a safe home environment year-round.



Sources

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