

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 10 2012

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
United States Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is a vital safety net for many low-income families, especially for our elderly, our disabled, and our veterans. As state agencies prepare their LIHEAP programs for the coming winter, it is imperative that the Department of Health and Human Services immediately release as much LIHEAP funding as possible under the current continuing resolution (CR).

As you know, spending patterns for LIHEAP assistance are not consistent throughout the fiscal year. Instead, the majority of assistance in many states is distributed during the winter months to offset high home heating costs. Many state governors have also projected that delays in LIHEAP funding would result in families across the country having unmet heating needs this winter. As you are also aware, low-income families spend a higher percentage of their income on energy costs. This is especially true during times of extreme temperatures and increased energy prices. October marks the beginning of the coldest months for many families, and with continued elevated levels of unemployment across our states, this year's heating season will be an even greater struggle. The timing is crucial for the release of the majority of LIHEAP funding.

Accordingly, we believe it is critical that the states begin the process of assisting those individuals with the greatest needs immediately. We request that you release as much LIHEAP funding as possible under the current CR without delay, in order to allow states and low-income households the resources they need to prepare for a challenging winter. With forecasts for above-normal snowfall for all major I-95 cities, including New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, the timing is critical.

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LIHEAP Letter to HHS

Thank you for your continued support of the LIHEAP program and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,


Edward J. Markey

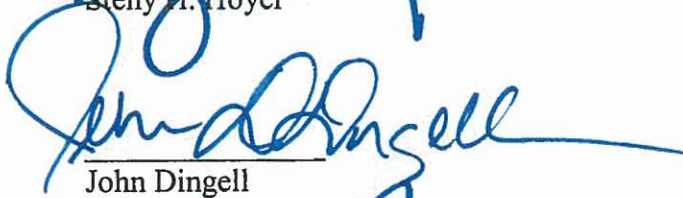

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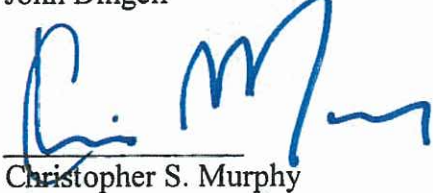

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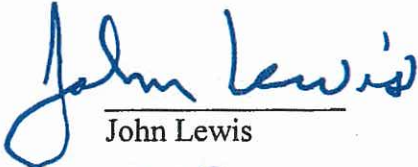

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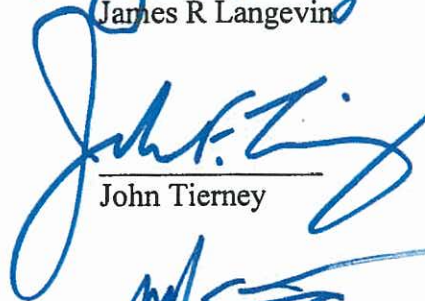

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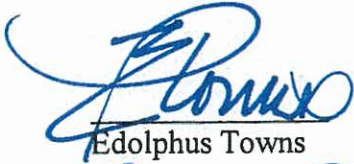

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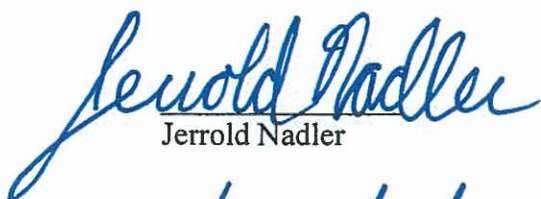

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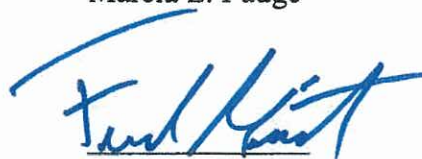

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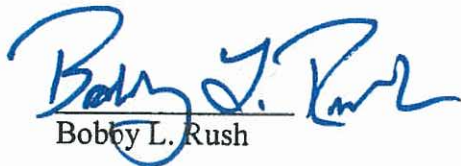

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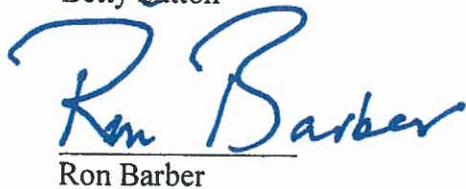

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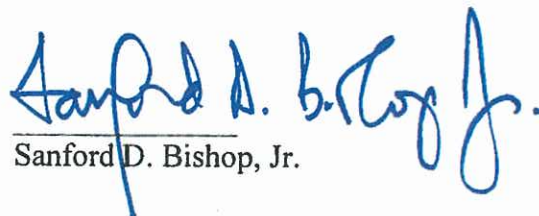

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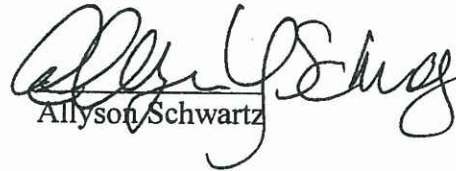

Elijah E. Cummings

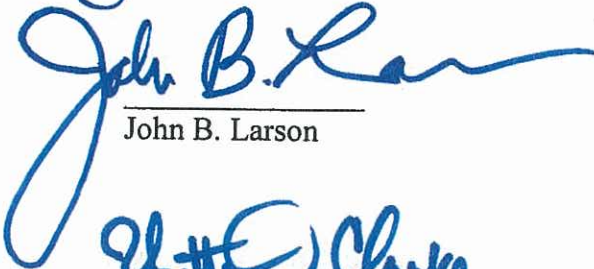

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Emanuel Cleaver



Christopher P. Gibson