

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 20, 2013

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221 United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230 United States Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Vice Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell, Chairwoman Mikulski, and Vice Chairman Shelby:

We write regarding funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). We appreciate your past support of this critical program and respectfully request that you again provide full-year funding for LIHEAP at no less than the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 level in any upcoming continuing resolution.

LIHEAP is the primary federal program that assists low-income households and seniors with their energy bills, providing vital assistance during both the cold winter and hot summer months. According to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association (NEADA), more than 90 percent of LIHEAP recipients have at least one elderly household member, disabled household member, or child in their homes. For these households, access to affordable home energy is a matter of health and safety. LIHEAP funding has been a lifeline during challenging economic times, helping to ensure that recipients do not have to choose between paying their energy bills and paying for other necessities like food and medicine.

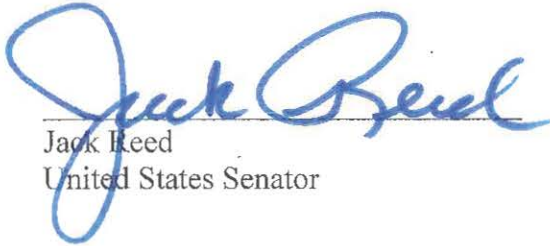
Unfortunately, the number of households eligible for the program continues to surpass those able to receive assistance. Funding for LIHEAP has declined 32 percent in recent years to \$3.47 billion in FY 2013. This has led to a reduction in the average grant award from \$417 to \$308 since 2009 and decreased the purchasing power of the grant for low-income households. With the Energy Information Administration projecting that household expenditures this winter for heating oil and natural gas will increase by 17 percent and eight percent, respectively, it is essential to ensure that states will receive the funds necessary to provide assistance to Americans in need.


In order to prevent added uncertainty and a decrease in the amount of funding available for grant awards compared to last year, we ask that you include language in the continuing resolution specifically directing the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to release the full amount of each state's LIHEAP allocation at the FY 2012 level. This would follow past precedent. The FY 2013 Continuing Appropriations Act directed HHS to distribute funds under


the same formula. We believe that the continued economic challenges, seasonality of the LIHEAP program, and anticipated length of the upcoming continuing resolution necessitates this specific stipulation for LIHEAP once again.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to working with you on this important matter.

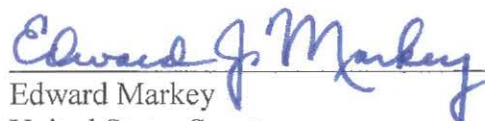
Sincerely,

  
Jack Reed  
United States Senator

  
Susan Collins  
United States Senator

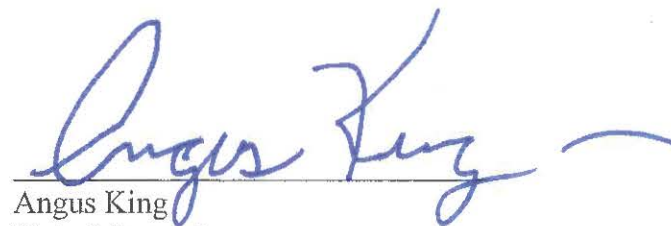
  
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator


  
Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senator

  
Edward Markey  
United States Senator

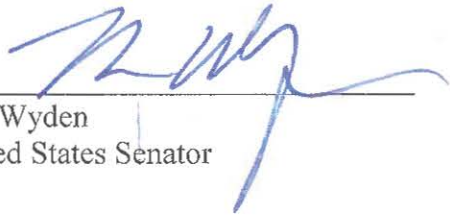
  
Kelly Ayotte  
United States Senator

  
Kirsten E. Gillibrand  
United States Senator

  
Angus King  
United States Senator

  
Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator

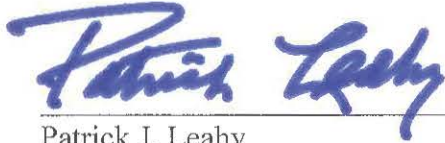
  
Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



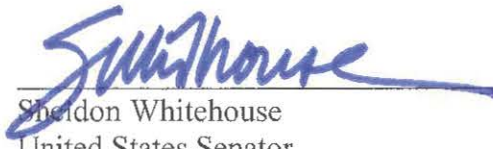
Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



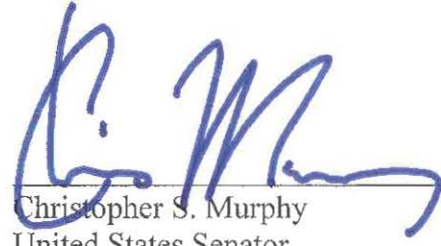
Patrick J. Leahy  
United States Senator



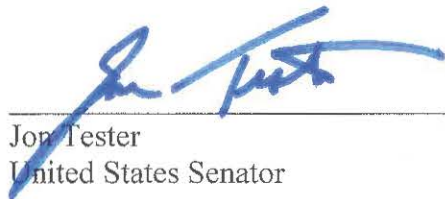
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator




Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



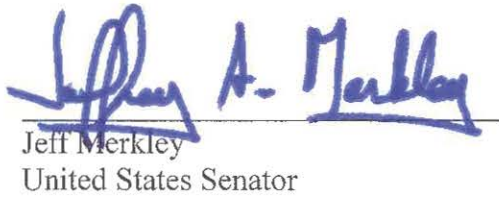
Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator



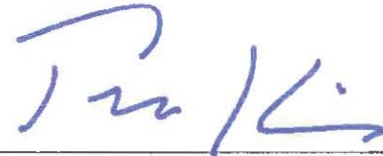
Jon Tester  
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



Jeff Merkley  
United States Senator



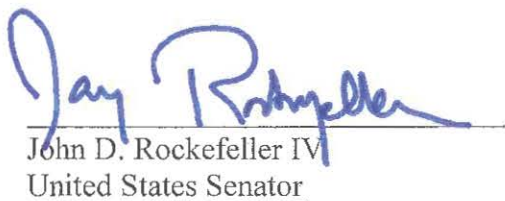
Tim Kaine  
United States Senator



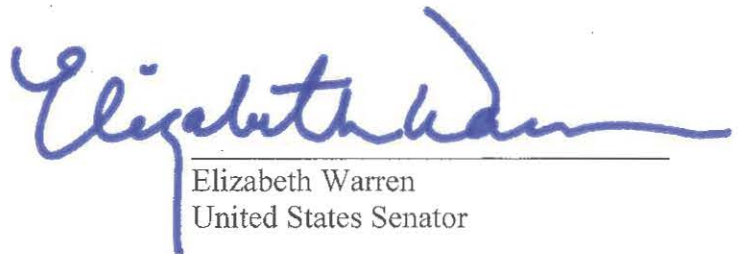
Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator



Brian Schatz  
United States Senator



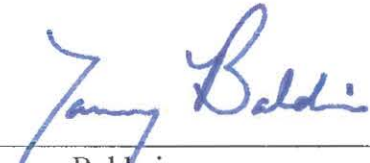
John D. Rockefeller IV  
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



Tim Johnson  
United States Senator



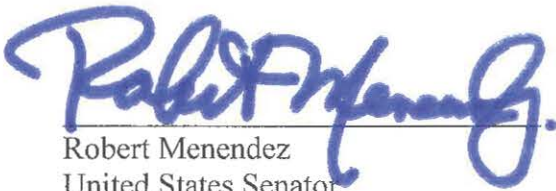
Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator



Mary Landrieu  
United States Senator



Ben Cardin  
United States Senator



Robert Menendez  
United States Senator



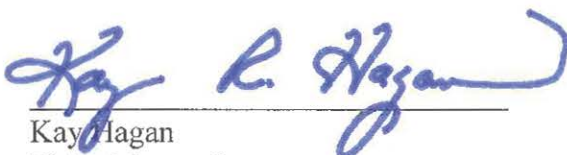
Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator



Al Franken  
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator



Kay Hagan  
United States Senator



Carl Levin  
United States Senator

CC: The Honorable Tom Harkin, Chairman

The Honorable Jerry Moran, Ranking Member