



National  
Consumer Law  
Center

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[NCLC.ORG](http://NCLC.ORG)

March 21, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Request for Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in COVID-19 Response Bill

Dear Senate Majority Leader McConnell and Senate Minority Leader Schumer:

As Congress prepares this next emergency relief bill to address the COVID-19 crisis, the National Consumer Law Center<sup>1</sup>, on behalf of its low-income clients, urges you to ensure that people will not face utility shut offs by considering \$1.4 billion for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

LIHEAP is the cornerstone of government efforts to help low-income seniors and families afford essential home energy services. LIHEAP is an important safety net program for the growing numbers of unemployed and underemployed households struggling with lost jobs and diminished wages in the wake of COVID-19. Home energy is all the more important today with families urged to stay at home and few if any other locations to shelter in if utilities are shut off. The National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC) estimates that an additional \$1.4 billion for LIHEAP can help up to 4 million more households maintain essential home energy service. This winter's crisis season has seriously depleted the current LIHEAP funds and the COVID-19 crisis is expected to become more severe as state winter shut-off moratoria are lifted.

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<sup>1</sup> Since 1969, the nonprofit [National Consumer Law Center](http://NationalConsumerLawCenter.org)® (NCLC®) has worked for consumer justice and economic security for low-income and other disadvantaged people in the U.S. through its expertise in policy analysis and advocacy, publications, litigation, expert witness services, and training.

Please help protect the health and safety of low-income households and the newly unemployed maintain access to their home energy services by considering this \$1.4 billion in funding for LIHEAP.

Sincerely,



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Olivia Wein  
Staff Attorney  
National Consumer Law Center