

November 16, 2010

Gov. Deval Patrick
Massachusetts

Gov. M. Jodi Rell
Connecticut

Gov. Bill Ritter, Jr.
Colorado

Gov. Jack Markell
Delaware

Gov. Pat Quinn
Illinois

Gov. Chester J. Culver
Iowa

Gov. John Baldacci
Maine

Gov. Martin O'Malley
Maryland

Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm
Michigan

Gov. John H. Lynch
New Hampshire

Gov. Bill Richardson
New Mexico

Gov. David A. Paterson
New York

Gov. Ted Strickland
Ohio

Gov. Brad Henry
Oklahoma

Gov. Theodore Kulongoski
Oregon

Gov. Edward G. Rendell
Pennsylvania

Gov. M. Michael Rounds
South Dakota

Gov. James H. Douglas
Vermont

Gov. John P. deJohng, Jr.
Virgin Islands

Gov. Jim Doyle
Wisconsin

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Reid, Senator McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Representative Boehner,

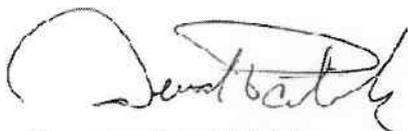
As you work to finalize funding levels for FY 2011, we urge you to provide at least the FY 2010 funding level of \$5.1 billion for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), including \$4.5 for the block grant program as well as sufficient contingency funds to address unforeseen energy emergencies. Should enactment of a continuing resolution become necessary, we urge you to continue LIHEAP funding at the FY2010 level of \$5.1 billion. We understand the budget challenges facing Congress, and deeply appreciate your longstanding support for LIHEAP. Given the continuing challenges facing our economy, this program is more essential than ever in providing a critical lifeline to those vulnerable households struggling to pay home energy bills.

LIHEAP provides heating and cooling assistance to low-income households, with benefits targeting the elderly, disabled, and families that are often forced to choose between paying for heating or cooling bills and food, medicine, and other essential needs. As governors, we have worked over the years to help assure that our most vulnerable residents are not overwhelmed by the volatile nature of home energy costs. This has often meant significant state contributions to emergency relief funds or supplementing existing state-federal programs.

In recent years, states across the country have seen an increase in the number of households requesting LIHEAP assistance. This trend will likely continue given the lingering effects of the economic downturn along with increases in home energy costs. For this winter alone, EIA projects that average household expenditures for space heating fuels will increase 4 percent for natural gas, 12 percent for home heating oil, and 2.5 percent overall. A decrease in overall program funding will force more LIHEAP households to face potential shut-offs or the loss of fuel delivery.

We greatly appreciate your consideration and continued commitment to helping our neediest families. We hope that you take this opportunity to actively support LIHEAP by level funding this critical program at \$5.1 billion.

Sincerely,



Governor Deval Patrick
Massachusetts



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Edmund G. Rendell
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M. Michael Rounds
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South Dakota

James H. Douglas
Governor James H. Douglas
Vermont



Governor John F. de Jongh, Jr.
Virgin Islands



Governor Jim Doyle
Wisconsin

Cc: The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Thad Cochran, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Dave Obey, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Jerry Lewis, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Tom Harkin, Chair, Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies Subcommittee
The Honorable Todd Tiahrt, Ranking Member, House Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee