

November 14, 2025

The Honorable Robert Kennedy Jr
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
330 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20416

The Honorable Russell Vought
Director The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Secretary Kennedy and Director Vought:

We write to urge for the immediate release of the highest possible amount of Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding available under the November 2025 Continuing Resolution.

As you well know, LIHEAP is a critical program that assists households unable to afford to heat their homes in the winter and cool their homes during dangerously high summer temperatures. In previous years, almost seven million at-risk households, families, and seniors across the country have received this vital assistance.¹ With the winter months approaching and extreme heat becoming increasingly frequent, families may soon be faced with the impossible choice between keeping their homes at a safe temperature and putting food on the table or affording their medications. LIHEAP has long acted as a lifeline to the most vulnerable in our communities, protecting families from life-threatening cold and heat throughout the year.

Unfortunately, the Administration has shown a blatant disregard for the critical importance of LIHEAP. The FY26 President's Budget Request (PBR) released earlier this year proposed completely eliminating the program without any plans to replace the needed assistance.² Furthermore, during a flurry of chaotic firings at HHS in April, it was reported that the entirety of the LIHEAP staff was summarily fired.³ These decisions have received bipartisan pushback, with Republicans in Congress disregarding the FY26 PBR, opting instead to increase LIHEAP

¹ Castiglione, Elea. "The Disconnection Spiral: How the Trump Administration's Attack on Liheap Risks a Larger Crisis." Kleinman Center for Energy Policy, May 7, 2025. <https://kleinmanenergy.upenn.edu/commentary/blog/the-disconnection-spiral-how-the-trump-administrations-attack-on-liheap-risks-a-larger-crisis/>.

² Lee, Medora. "Trump's FY26 Budget Plan Would Cut All Utilities Assistance for 6 Million Households." USA Today. Accessed November 5, 2025. [https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance/2025/04/18/six-million-households-utilities-assistance-trump-budget/83156528007/#~:text=Trump's%20FY26%20budget%20plan%20would,assistance%20for%206%20million%20households.&text=As%20many%20as%205.9%20million,represents%20their%20interests%20before%20Congress](https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance/2025/04/18/six-million-households-utilities-assistance-trump-budget/83156528007/#~:text=Trump's%20FY26%20budget%20plan%20would,assistance%20for%206%20million%20households.&text=As%20many%20as%205.9%20million,represents%20their%20interests%20before%20Congress.).

³ Nawaz, Amna, and Azhar Merchant. "Utility Assistance Frozen after Trump Administration Fires Program's Staff." PBS, April 24, 2025. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/utility-assistance-frozen-after-trump-administration-fires-programs-staff>.

funding in the FY26 Appropriations process.⁴ However, the pause in funding due to the government shutdown has delayed disbursement across the country, leaving seniors and families who usually receive LIHEAP assistance this time of year in jeopardy. The Administration's reckless firings of all LIHEAP staff will only prolong these delays, as it is unclear who will approve states' program plans and manage the release of the funds now that funding has been approved. While States and community organizations are working to provide emergency relief, it has been estimated that seniors and families may be without LIHEAP assistance until January.⁵

While the Administration prioritized U.S. military takeovers of Democratic cities, a \$40 billion bailout for Argentina, and debating private citizens on X over aggressive ICE tactics during the government shutdown, at-risk Americans were left worried about their rising electricity costs.⁶ And this problem is only getting worse, as disruptions to the electricity supply chain, higher fuel costs, and surging energy demand have continued to skyrocket utility costs, placing additional strain on families. LIHEAP funding has become more important, as residential electricity prices have increased significantly since 2020, while the frequency and duration of extreme heat events have more than doubled over the past decade.⁷ Low-income households, seniors, and those in rural and underserved communities are hit hardest by these cost increases, and they are often the least equipped to endure prolonged periods of extreme temperatures, putting them at heightened risk of temperature-related illness and death. In 2023 alone, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recorded more than 2,300 heat-related fatalities—the highest number in decades.

LIHEAP is already an oversubscribed and underfunded program, reaching only about 17 percent of eligible households⁸. Without immediate action, millions of families across the country could lose access to essential energy services, leaving families exposed to severe health and safety risks as temperatures continue to fluctuate between dangerous heat and cold. Ensuring the immediate release of LIHEAP funds is therefore not only a matter of compassion, but one of public health, safety, and economic stability.

LIHEAP has enjoyed strong bipartisan support for decades because no American family should be forced to choose between warmth in the winter and safety during extreme heat. To prevent a lapse in eligible families' ability to afford their home energy bills this fall, we urge you to

⁴ Congress.gov. "S.2587 - 119th Congress (2025-2026): Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2026." July 31, 2025. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/2587>; Congress.gov. "H.R.5304 - 119th Congress (2025-2026): Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2026." September 11, 2025. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/5304>.

⁵ Schmidt, Sophia. "The Government Shutdown Is Delaying an Assistance Program Families Use to Heat Homes." NPR, November 6, 2025. <https://www.npr.org/2025/11/06/nx-s1-5598497/government-shutdown-delays-heat-homes-electric-bills-pennsylvania>.

⁶ Fleming, Margaret. "DHS Is Arguing with an NBA Fan Account on Twitter." Front Office Sports, October 22, 2025. <https://frontofficesports.com/dhs-nba-bucks-twitter-hoodgenius/>.

⁷ U.S. electricity prices continue steady increase - U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA), May 14, 2025. <https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=65284>.

⁸ Kutz, Jessica. "This Program Helps 6 Million Families Pay Their Energy Bills. Here's What's at Risk If It's Cut." The 19th, May 27, 2025. <https://19thnews.org/2025/05/liheap-energy-electricity-funding-low-income-families/#:~:text=And%20in%20a%202019%20survey,without%20a%20strong%20LIHEAP%20program.%E2%80%9D>.

immediately release the highest possible amount of LIHEAP funding made available by the Continuing Resolution and ensure the program is properly staffed to efficiently disburse these funds. It is vital that our seniors, children, and low-income families are provided with sufficient resources as temperatures drop in the coming months and rise again in the summer ahead.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to working with you further on this crucial program.

Sincerely,



Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



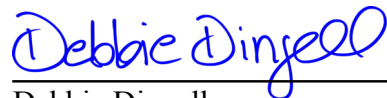
Marc A. Veasey
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Doris Matsui
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Ro Khanna
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Lateefah Simon
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Mark Takano
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Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
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Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



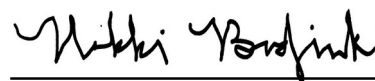
Ted W. Lieu
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Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



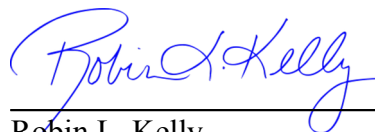
Veronica Escobar
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Nikki Budzinski
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Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



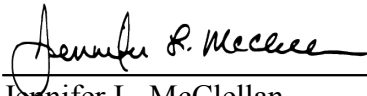
Robin L. Kelly
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Jim Costa
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Eric Sorensen
Member of Congress



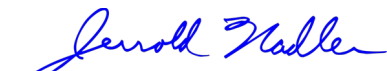
Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



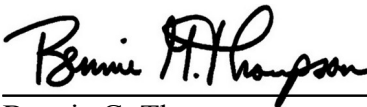
Rashida Tlaib
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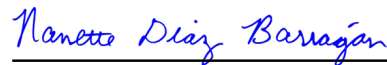
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Jerrold Nadler
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Bennie G. Thompson
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Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



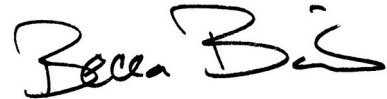
Sharice L. Davids
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Member of Congress



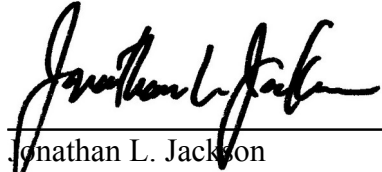
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Maggie Goodlander
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Dan Goldman
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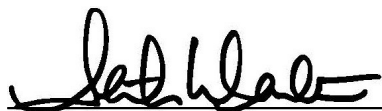
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Sylvia R. Garcia
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Joyce Beatty
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Seth Moulton
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Josh Riley
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Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



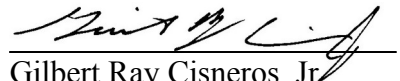
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



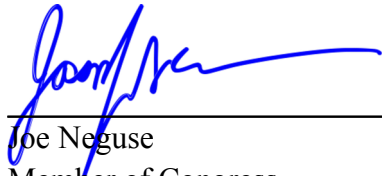
Terri A. Sewell
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Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.
Member of Congress



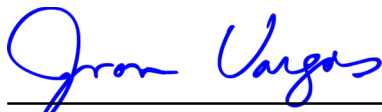
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Joe Neguse
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Steven Horsford
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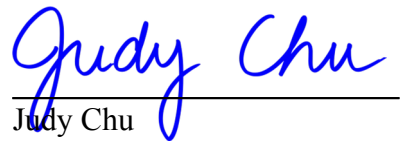
Juan Vargas
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Yvette D. Clarke
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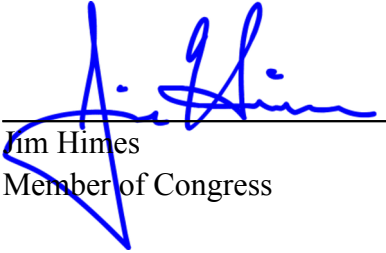
Judy Chu
Member of Congress



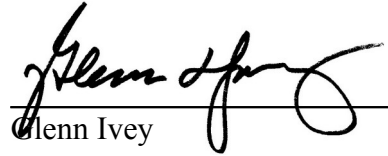
James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress



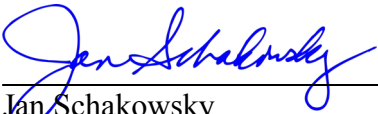
Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress



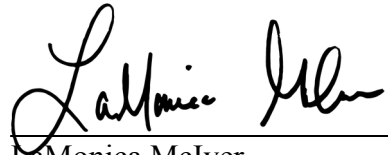
Jim Himes
Member of Congress



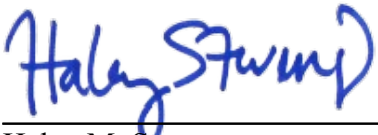
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Haley M. Stevens
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Wesley Bell
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Ayanna Pressley
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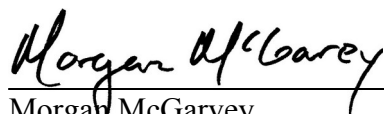
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Greg Stanton
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Gabe Amo
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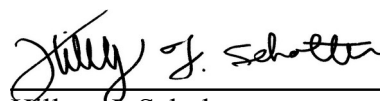
Morgan McGarvey
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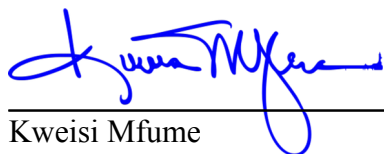
Andrea Salinas
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Chrissy Houlahan
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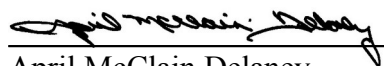
Hillary J. Scholten
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Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



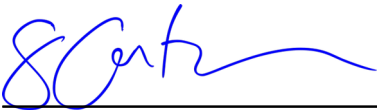
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April McClain Delaney
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Maxwell Alejandro Frost
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Sean Casten
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Bradley Scott Schneider
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Chellie Pingree
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Al Green
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Ritchie Torres
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Eric Swalwell
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Mike Levin
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Shontel M. Brown
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Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



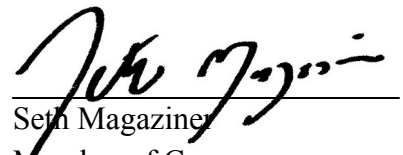
Bill Foster
Member of Congress



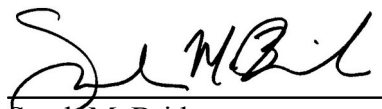
Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



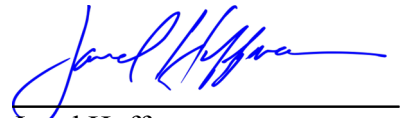
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Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
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Emilia Strong Sykes
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