Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 14th, 2005

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David R. Obey
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

We are writing to urge you to increase funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to the highest level possible in the Labor, Health and Human Services Conference Agreement for fiscal year 2006. Currently, the House has funded LIHEAP at $2.006 billion for regular state block grants and the Senate has funding the program at $1.883 billion for regular state block grants and $300 million for contingency funding. Both levels fall far short of the needs this coming winter and year.

The destruction caused by this year's hurricane season is rippling across our economy, generating significant increases in energy prices. With the winter just around the corner many cold-weather states are bracing for what could be the most expensive heating season in history. Based on the Energy Information Administration's most recent Short-Term Energy Outlook,

> *On average, households heating primarily with natural gas likely will spend $306 (41 percent) more for fuel this winter than last winter. Households heating primarily with heating oil can expect to pay, on average, $325 (27 percent) more this winter than last. Households heating primarily with propane can expect to pay, on average, $230 (21 percent) more this winter than last... Should colder weather prevail, expenditures could be significantly higher.*

For many low-income families, disabled individuals and senior citizens living on fixed incomes, these price increases will make home energy unaffordable.

Even prior to the damage this year's hurricane season caused our energy markets Congress recognized the vastly reduced purchasing power of this important program and increase the authorization from $2 billion to $5.1 billion in the newly enacted Energy Policy Act. We now find ourselves in an even more challenging situation. To ensure all our states are helped this program requires significantly more funding.

While we understand the budgetary constraints governing Conference negotiations, we encourage you to do whatever you can to fund this program at the highest level possible to expeditiously deliver this vital funding to the states before the arrival of severe winter weather. Funding LIHEAP at or below last

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year's level ($1.885 in regular state block grant funding and $298 million for contingency funds) will prove perilously inadequate. Thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Jeb Bradley

Bobby L. Rush

Robert E. V

Charles F. Bass

Tim Holden

Jerrold Nadler

John M. McHugh

Sherrod Brown

Luis V. Gutierrez

Richard Shelby

Michael R. McNulty

Donald M. Payne

Pat Roberts

Bill Sali

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Barbara Lee

Thaddeus McCotter

Julia Carson

Michael Fitzpatrick

Tom Tom

Tom A. LaBiondo

Nancy L. Johnson

Louise M. Slaughter

Bart Stupak

Chris Smith

Jose E. Serrano

[illegible]

William Delahunt

Ron Kind

Tammy Baldwin

[illegible]

Phil English

[illegible]

Sheila Jackson Lee

Bob Ney

Jim Oberstar

Gene Green

Eliot L. Engel

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Dennis Moore

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Jan Schakowsky

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Stephanie Haseth

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Mike Doyle

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Ted Strickland

Adam Smith

Carolyn McCarthy

Sandy Levin

Diana DeGette

Raúl M. Grijalva

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Leonard L. Boswell

Earl Pomeroy

Chris Van Hollen

Susan A. Davis

Tom Allen

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Ed Towns

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1. Ackerman, Gary
2. Allen, Tom
3. Andrews, Robert
4. Baldwin, Tammy
5. Bass, Charles
6. Boswell, Leonard
7. Boucher, Rick
8. Bradley, Jeb
9. Brown, Sherrod
10. Cardin, Benjamin
11. Carson, Julia
12. Chandler, Ben
13. Conyers, John
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16. DeFazio, Peter
17. DeGette, Diana
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19. Dent, Charlie
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21. Doyle, Michael
22. Engel, Eliot
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25. Fossella, Vito
26. Frank, Barney
27. Graves, Sam
28. Green, Gene
29. Grijalva, Raul
30. Gutierrez, Luis
31. Herseth, Stephanie
32. Higgins, Brian
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34. Holt, Rush
35. Hoyer, Steny
36. Israel, Steve
37. Jackson-Lee, Sheila
38. Johnson, Eddie Bernice
39. Johnson, Nancy
40. Kennedy, Mark
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42. King, Peter
43. Kuhl, Randy
44. Larson, John
45. LaTourette, Steven
46. Lee, Barbara
47. Levin, Sander
48. LoBiondo, Frank

49. Lynch, Stephen
50. Markey, Ed
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52. McCollum, Betty
53. McCotter, Thaddeus
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55. McGovern, James
56. McHugh, John
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59. Menendez, Robert
60. Michaud, Michael
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62. Nadler, Jerrold
63. Neal, Richard
64. Ney, Robert
65. Oberstar, James
66. Olver, John
67. Osborne, Tom
68. Owens, Major
69. Pallone, Frank
70. Pascrell, William
71. Payne, Donald
72. Peterson, Collin
73. Pomeroy, Earl
74. Ramstad, Jim
75. Ruppersberger, Dutch
76. Rush, Bobby
77. Sanders, Bernie
78. Schakowsky, Janice
79. Schwartz, Allyson
80. Schwarz, Joe
81. Scott, David
82. Serrano, Jose
83. Simmons, Rob
84. Slaughter, Louise
85. Smith, Adam
86. Smith, Chris
87. Spratt, John
88. Strickland, Ted
89. Stupak, Bart
90. Tauscher, Ellen
91. Towns, Edolphus
92. Van Hollen, Chris
93. Waxman, Henry
94. Wynn, Albert