

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 23, 2008

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Republican Leader McConnell, Chairman Byrd, and Ranking Member Cochran:

We are writing to request that in the economic stimulus package you include an additional \$3.62 billion for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to fully fund the program at \$5.1 billion in FY2008 and provide an additional \$500 million in contingency funding. An infusion of LIHEAP funding can be used by low-income households to help cope with their rising home energy bills. LIHEAP funds will be spent quickly and immediately to stimulate the economy and provide a vital safety net to families and seniors so they do not need to choose between eating and paying their energy bill.

With the price of oil remaining at a record high and the cost of natural gas increasing, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates that households can expect to pay between 8 to 39 percent more for heating fuels than during the 2007-2008 winter. Home heating prices are projected by the EIA to reach almost \$1,000 this year for the typical family. As a result, there has been a significant decrease in the program's purchasing power. The level of assistance that the program is providing is not enough to help meet a household's escalating energy burden. As such, states need additional funding immediately to reduce the energy burden of families, individuals with disabilities, and senior citizens and ensure their health and safety this winter.

LIHEAP is vital to protecting the public health and safety of low-income families. According to the Children's Sentinel Nutrition Assessment Program (C-SNAP) out of Boston Medical Center, babies and toddlers who live in energy insecure households are more likely to suffer poor health, require hospitalization, manifest developmental problems, and lack adequate food. C-SNAP found that when families do not have access to sufficient energy, they may resort to unsafe heating methods and do not have the proper means to refrigerate or prepare food for their children. In addition, without a sufficient LIHEAP benefit, seniors living on fixed incomes often have to decide between buying life-saving prescriptions and paying utility bills. For individuals and households that may have to face these difficult choices, LIHEAP makes a real difference in their ability to cope with adverse circumstances.

We request that the economic stimulus package provide at least \$3.62 billion in additional funding for LIHEAP in FY2008 to help low-income seniors and families with their home energy expenses.

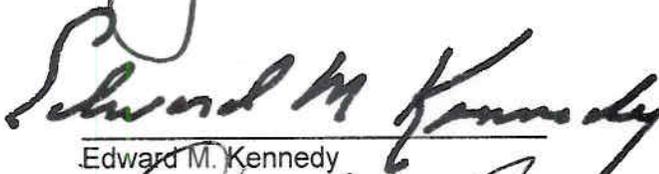
Sincerely,



Jack Reed



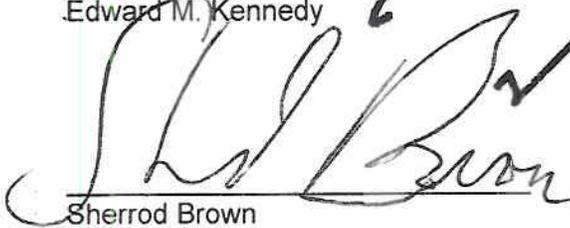
Susan M. Collins



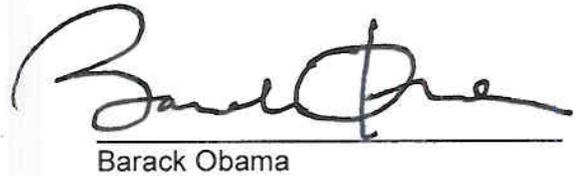
Edward M. Kennedy



Christopher J. Dodd



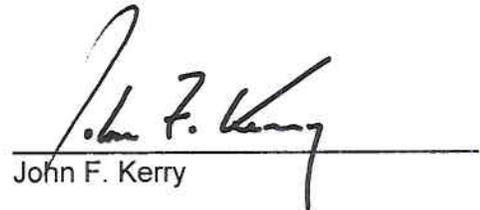
Sherrod Brown



Barack Obama



Joseph I. Lieberman



John F. Kerry



Debbie Stabenow



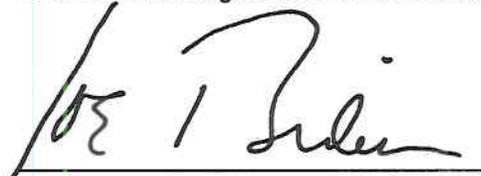
Richard G. Lugar



Barbara A. Mikulski



Sheldon Whitehouse

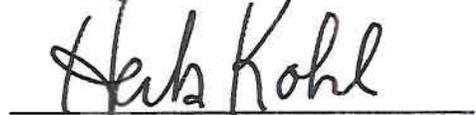
  
Joseph R. Biden

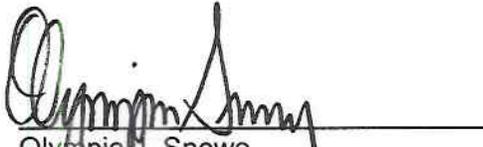
  
Bernard Sanders

  
Hillary Rodham Clinton

  
Jeff Bingaman

  
Carl Levin

  
Herb Kohl

  
Olympia J. Snowe

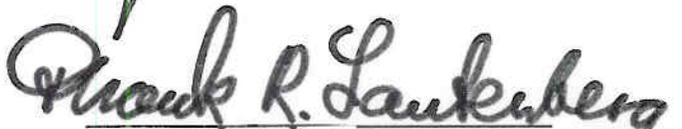
  
Evan Bayh

  
Lisa Murkowski

  
Robert Menendez

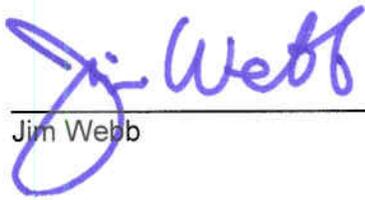
  
Jon Tester

  
Maria Cantwell

  
Frank R. Lautenberg

  
John E. Sununu

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Letter to Senators Reid, McConnell, Byrd, and Cochran  
LIHEAP Funding in Economic Stimulus Package



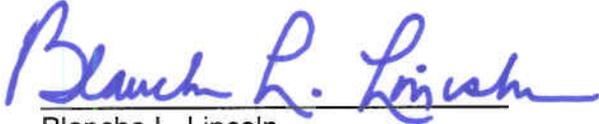
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Jim Webb



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Mary L. Landrieu



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Blanche L. Lincoln

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