

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 25, 2015

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Tom Cole and Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro,

We are writing to request that you prioritize the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in your Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 appropriations bill by including no less than \$4.7 billion for this program that provides critical support to our most vulnerable citizens.

LIHEAP helps low-income households and seniors with their energy bills, providing vital assistance during both the cold winter and hot summer months. LIHEAP households are among the most vulnerable in the country. According to the National Energy Assistance Director's Association (NEADA), more than 90 percent of LIHEAP recipients have at least one household member who is a child, elderly, or disabled, and 20 percent of households contain at least one veteran. For these households, LIHEAP funding has been a lifeline during challenging economic times. Access to affordable home energy is not a luxury – it is a matter of health and safety.

We understand the ongoing discretionary budget challenges. However, we are deeply concerned that funding for LIHEAP has declined more than 30 percent in recent years. Moreover, the number of households eligible for assistance continues to exceed available funding. According to NEADA, the total number of households receiving LIHEAP assistance has declined by 17.7 percent between FY 2010 and FY 2014, from 8.1 million to 6.6 million. About 1.5 million poor households have lost access to critical LIHEAP assistance and struggle to pay for the basic necessity of home energy in addition to other essentials like food and medicine.

Funding has declined by almost \$1.7 billion since FY 2010, yet energy costs have remained high, reducing the purchasing power of LIHEAP assistance. Recipients have seen their average LIHEAP grant reduced by about \$95 since 2010, from \$520 in FY 2010 to \$424 in FY 2014. The average LIHEAP grant is estimated to cover less than half of the average home heating costs for a household this winter, meaning that many low-income families and seniors will have fewer resources available to meet other basic needs.

As you finalize your FY 2016 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we ask that you take into account the great need for LIHEAP. We urge you to reprioritize this program and restore funding to this program to a level no less than \$4.7 billion.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of this important request.


Sincerely,



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



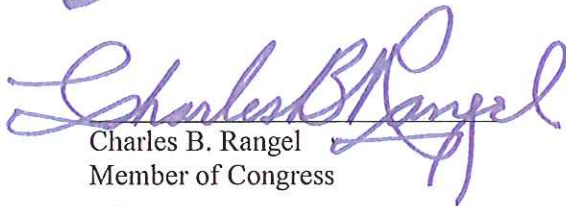
Peter King
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



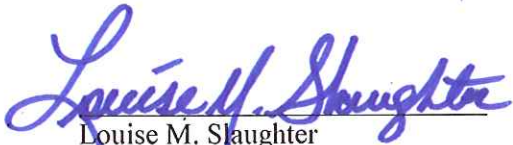
Lou Barletta
Member of Congress



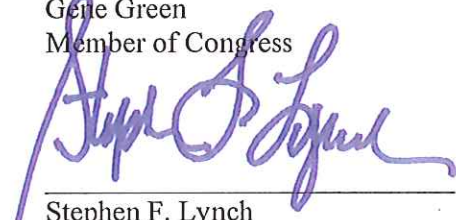
Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress



Gene Green
Member of Congress



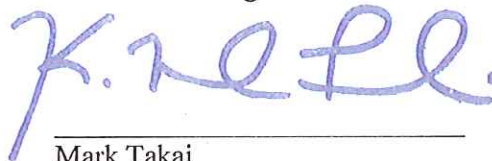
Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress



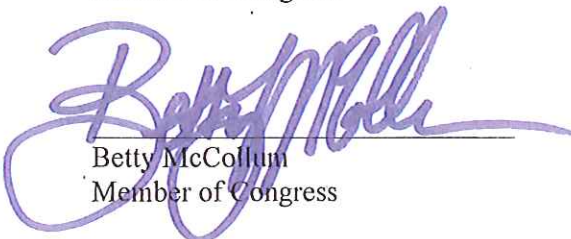
Mark Takai
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



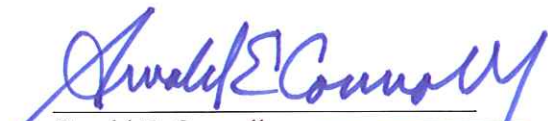
Dan Benishek
Member of Congress

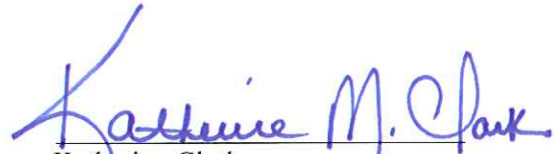


Betty McCollum
Member of Congress




Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress

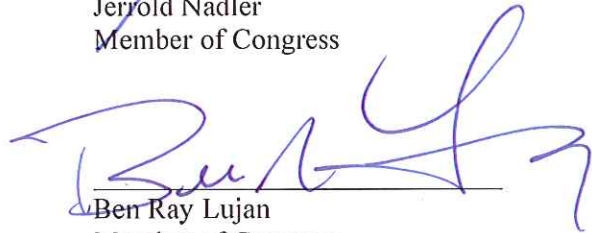

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress


Katherine Clark
Member of Congress



Tim Walz
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Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

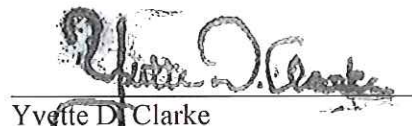

G.K. Butterfield
Member of Congress

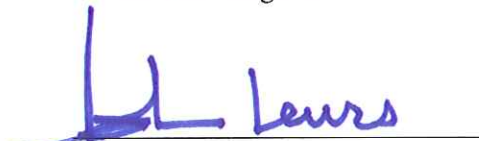

Ben Ray Lujan
Member of Congress


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Chris Van Hollen
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Raul Ruiz
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Paul Tonko
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Cheri Bustos
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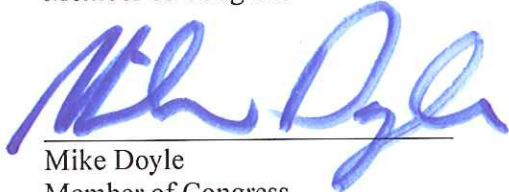
Bruce Poliquin
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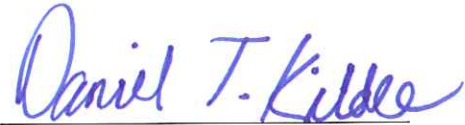
John Katko
Member of Congress



Beto O'Rourke
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Mike Doyle
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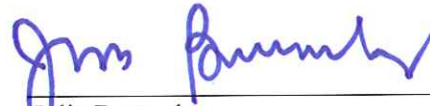
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



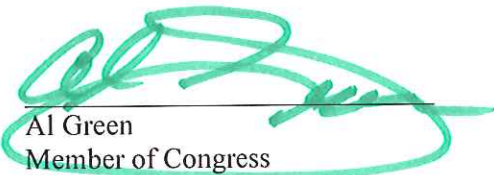
Robert C. Scott
Member of Congress



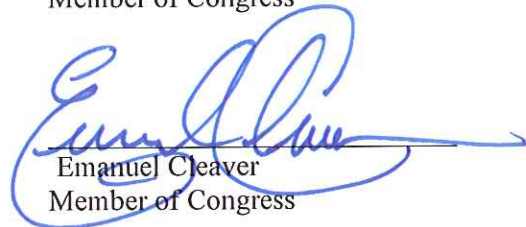
Chris Collins
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Al Green
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress



Elijah Cummings
Member of Congress



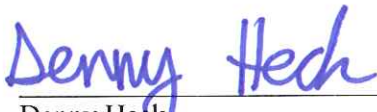
John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



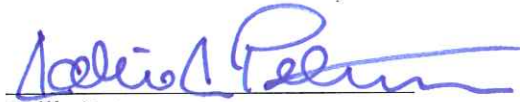
Filemon Vela
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



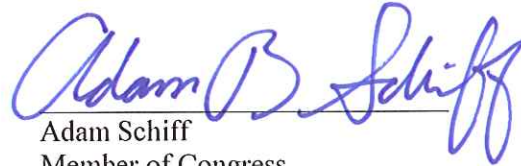
Denny Heck
Member of Congress



Collin Peterson
Member of Congress



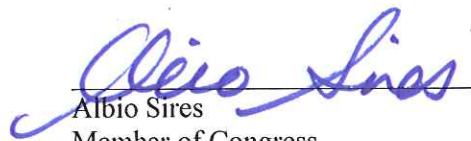
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Adam Schiff
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



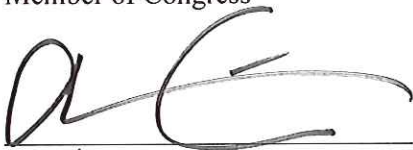
Albio Sires
Member of Congress



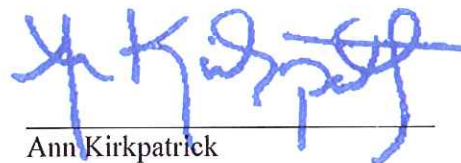
Alcee L. Hastings
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Alma S. Adams
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André Carson
Member of Congress



Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress



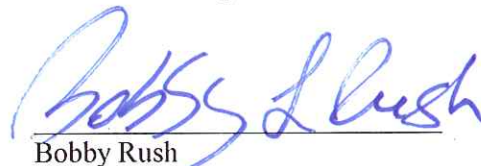
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Bill Foster
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Bill Pascrell Jr.
Member of Congress



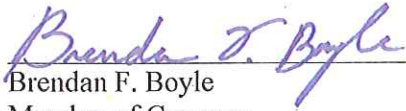
Bobby Rush
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Tim Walz
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Brenda L. Lawrence
Member of Congress

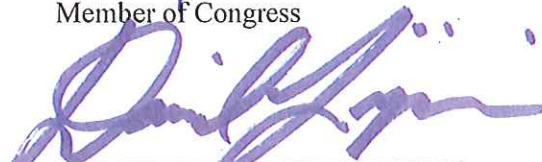

Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress

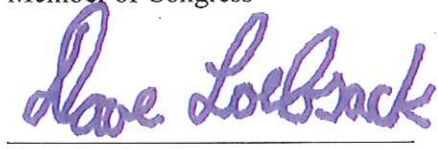

Candice Miller
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Chaka Fattah
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Chellie Pingree
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Tony Cardenas
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Daniel Lipinski
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Dave Loebsack
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Tulsi Gabbard
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Brian Higgins
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Caroline Maloney
Member of Congress

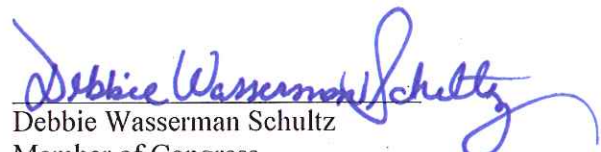

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Debbie Wasserman Schultz
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Diana DeGette

Diana DeGette
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Donald Payne Jr.

Donald Payne Jr.
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Donna F. Edwards

Donna F. Edwards
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Earl Blumenauer

Earl Blumenauer
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Eliot Engel

Eliot Engel
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Elizabeth H. Esty

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Glenn 'GT' Thompson

Glenn 'GT' Thompson
Member of Congress

Grace Meng

Grace Meng
Member of Congress

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson
Member of Congress

James Himes

James Himes
Member of Congress

Janice D. Schakowsky

Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Jared Polis

Jared Polis
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



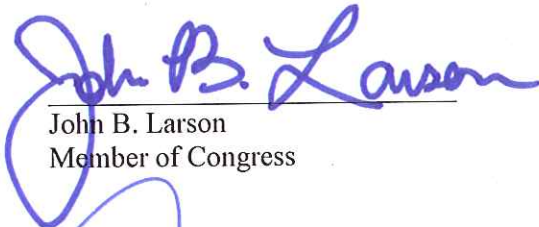
Jim Langevin
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Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



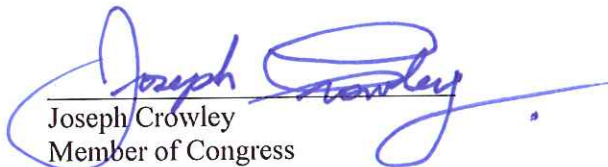
John Conyers
Member of Congress



John K. Delaney
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



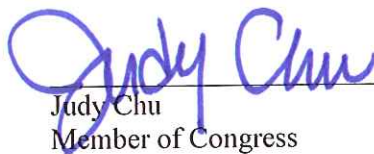
Joseph P. Kennedy III
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



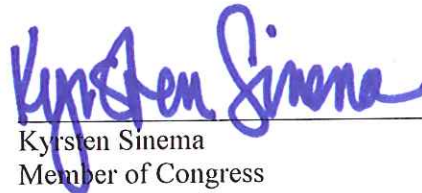
Judy Chu
Member of Congress



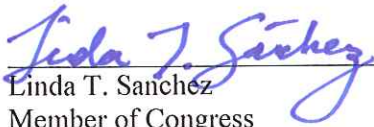
Kathleen Rice
Member of Congress

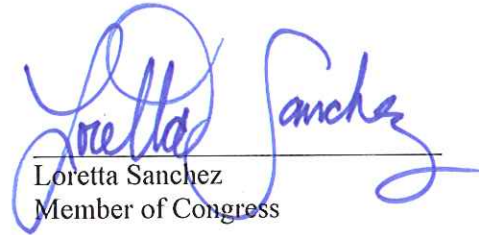


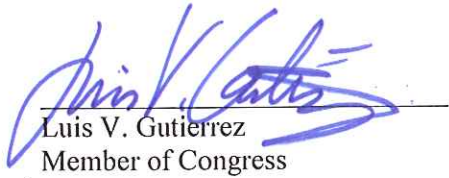
Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Kyrsten Sinema
Member of Congress


Linda T. Sanchez
Member of Congress


Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress


Luis V. Gutierrez
Member of Congress


Marc Veasey
Member of Congress


Marcia Fudge
Member of Congress

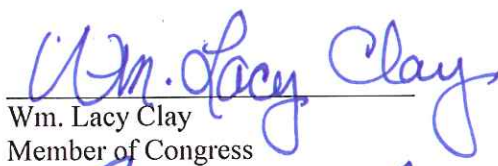

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress


Mark Pocan
Member of Congress

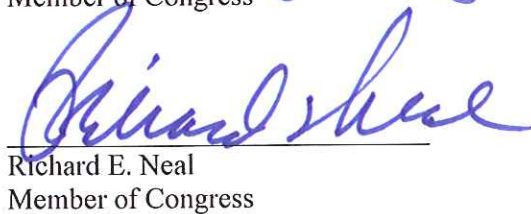

Mark Takano
Member of Congress

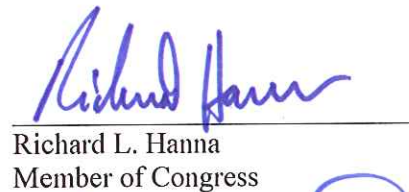

Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress

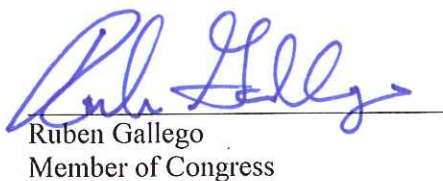

Michael G. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

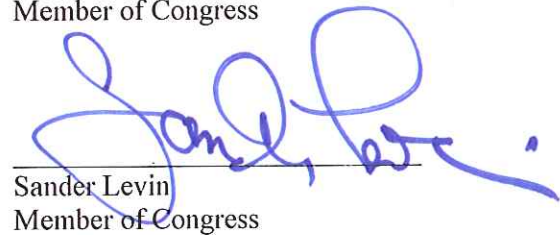

Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress

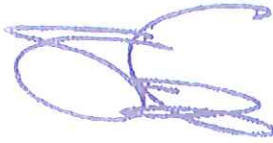

Pedro R. Pierluisi
Member of Congress


Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress

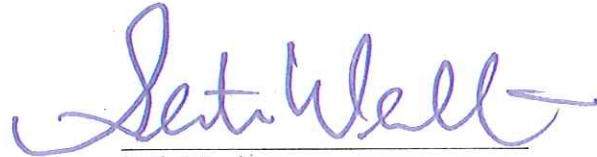

Richard L. Hanna
Member of Congress


Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

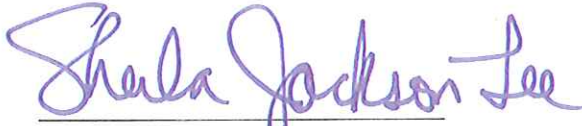

Sander Levin
Member of Congress



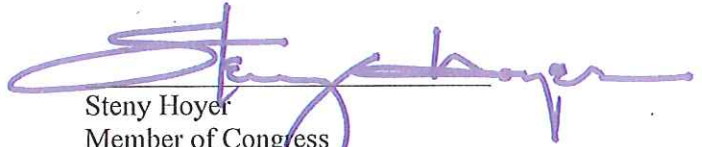
Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



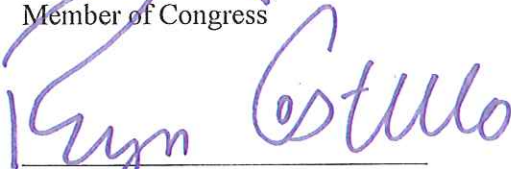
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



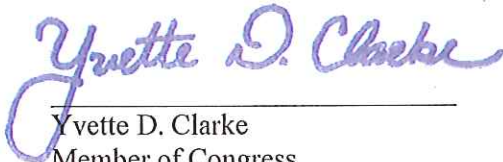
Steny Hoyer
Member of Congress



Ryan Costello
Member of Congress



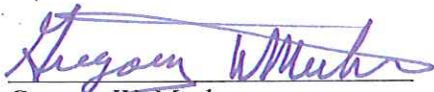
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



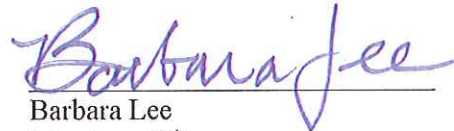
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Terri Sewell
Member of Congress



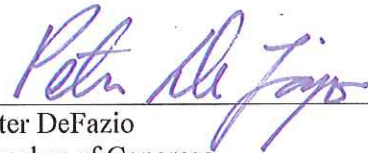
Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



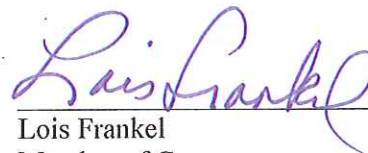
Grace F. Napolitano
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Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel
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Donald Norcross
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Frank C. Guinta
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Michelle Lujan Grisham

Michelle Lujan Grisham
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Don Beyer

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
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Matt Cartwright

Matt Cartwright
Member of Congress