

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 1, 2026

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C., 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

As the cost of home heating skyrockets across the country due to the illegal and unconstitutional war in Iran, we urge you to request an emergency appropriation of at least \$3 billion for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), in addition to \$4 billion in regular appropriations consistent with Fiscal Year 2026 funding levels.

Without immediate action, senior citizens on fixed incomes, working families with kids, and people with disabilities are at serious risk of going cold this winter. In the richest country in the history of the world, we cannot let that happen.

Last year, LIHEAP helped some six million Americans—some of the most vulnerable people in our country—stay warm in the winter. Unbelievably, at a time when one in five families have been forced to make the unacceptable choice of whether to pay their utility bills, heat their homes, purchase their prescription drugs, or put food on the table, LIHEAP funding is lower today than it was twenty years ago, after adjusting for inflation. Due to this woefully inadequate funding, four out of every five Americans who are eligible for LIHEAP do not receive any financial assistance. That is unacceptable.

Adding insult to injury, President Trump's war in Iran and his opposition to renewable energy is sending home heating costs through the roof. According to a recent story in the New York Times, "The price of heating oil, a fuel that is very similar to the diesel used in trucks, is up roughly 60 percent since Israel and the United States started attacking Iran on Feb. 28." As a result, families who heat their homes with heating oil could see their winter heating bill increase by more than \$800. Meanwhile, families who heat their homes with electricity and propane could see their winter heating bill increase by more than \$100.

Emergency LIHEAP assistance is needed now more than ever. Without this vital funding, states will be forced to turn away families, reduce benefits, or exhaust heating assistance funds well before winter is over.

Being able to heat your home in the freezing cold is not a luxury. It is a matter of life and death.

We look forward to your quick response and action on this extraordinarily important issue.

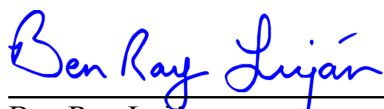
Sincerely,



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Health, Education, Labor,
and Pensions



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



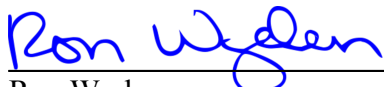
Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



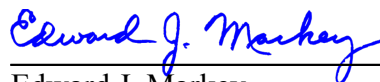
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Lisa Blunt Rochester
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



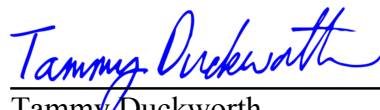
Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator