

Dear:

I am writing, both as a natural gas utility customer and your constituent, to urge you to support increased funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

Even before the hurricanes caused natural gas and heating oil prices to jump, this program was seriously under-funded and unable to aid hundreds of thousands of households that need help to keep their homes heated and cooled. Every day I read about rising energy costs and even the U.S. government is predicting that on average, natural gas prices will rise 48 percent this winter. I know this increase will hurt my family's finances and will impose an even greater burden on those less fortunate than I.

While conserving energy, removing restrictions on the exploration for and production of more natural gas, and encouraging the use of cleaner burning coal and nuclear energy for electric generation are all long-term solutions, LIHEAP represents one of the precious few legitimate short-term solutions to rising energy prices.

I urge you to support increasing the funding for LIHEAP so that this vital program is finally properly funded. Your leadership on this matter will go a long way toward helping to relieve the burden of high-energy prices for millions of low- and fixed-income households.

Sincerely,