



# AMERICAN PUBLIC GAS ASSOCIATION

February 10, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

On behalf of the American Public Gas Association (APGA), I am writing to urge you to reconsider your proposal to reduce funding levels by \$2.5 billion for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) as a part of your proposed FY12 budget.

APGA is the national trade association representing over 700 municipally and publicly-owned local natural gas distribution systems that work to meet the daily energy needs of over 5 million customers in 36 states. Publicly-owned gas systems are not-for-profit retail distribution entities that are owned by, and accountable to, the citizens they serve. They include municipal gas distribution systems, public utility districts, county districts, and other public agencies that have natural gas distribution facilities.

We understand the serious deficit and debt challenges that face this country. The questions of how to responsibly reduce both are complex and fraught with peril both practically and politically. We applaud you for undertaking this challenge, but respectfully request that you carefully consider the impact of cutting this critical program.

Millions of the most vulnerable citizens in our country rely on LIHEAP funding to meet their energy needs. For these people, the choice between adequate home heating or putting food on their tables is not simply hyperbolic rhetoric; it is the reality with which they must struggle every day. If LIHEAP funding were to be cut in such fashion, it is estimated that approximately 3 million Americans eligible for the program may not be able to receive it.

As such, we would request that in the midst of economic difficulties, an unusually harsh winter, and with increasing energy prices looming, you maintain the LIHEAP program funding level at least at the FY10 level of \$5.1 billion. We believe that this level of funding adequately protects the most vulnerable among us, while demonstrating a commitment to responsibly address pressing fiscal issues.

I thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Bert Kalisch  
President & CEO