

November 21, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Mayors of major cities across the United States, we are writing to request that you include no less than \$4.7 billion for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in your Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 budget request.

LIHEAP is an essential resource for our communities' most underserved populations, including the working poor, the disabled and the elderly living on fixed incomes. LIHEAP is an exceptionally efficient and targeted program, with state block grants flowing to local agencies which provide short-term assistance to help cover a portion of their heating costs in the winter and cooling costs in the summer.

We are concerned that funding for LIHEAP has declined by more than 30 percent in recent years. Total funding has been reduced from \$5.1 billion in FY2010 to the \$3.4 billion as specified in the recent FY2015 continuing resolution. During this period, the number of households served fell from approximately 8.1 million to 6.7 million. In addition, the average LIHEAP payments have been reduced by more than \$100 since 2010, dropping from \$520 in FY2010 to \$406 in FY2013.

According to recently reported 2013 data from the US Census Bureau, 14.5 percent of the country, 45 million people, have incomes below the poverty threshold. While this is a slight decrease from the previous year, this total is still significantly larger than the 12.3% in poverty in 2006, before the recession began. Energy costs continue to place an enormous burden on households.

Increased financial burden as a result of rising energy costs, recent patterns of severe weather and record numbers of households coming forward for assistance are just some of the reasons we urge you to include no less than \$4.7 billion in your FY2016 budget. We thank you for your consideration of this request and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

MARTIN J. WALSH
Mayor – Boston, Massachusetts

FRANCIS G. SLAY
Mayor – St. Louis, Missouri