United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 2, 2014

The Honorable Sylvia Burwell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Burwell:

As state agencies prepare their Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) programs for the winter, we respectfully request that the Department of Health and Human Services release LIHEAP funds as quickly and at as high of a level as possible under the current continuing resolution.

LIHEAP is the main federal program that helps low-income households and seniors with their energy bills, providing critical assistance during the cold winter and hot summer months. This funding has been an indispensable lifeline during challenging economic times, helping to ensure that recipients do not have to choose between paying their energy bills and paying for other necessities like food or medicine. On average, low-income families and seniors spend a higher proportion of their income on energy, and for many states, October marks the start of the heating season, creating an additional constraint on these household budgets.

As the relevant state agencies begin to provide assistance for this winter, it is critical that they have the resources to assist low-income households and seniors as soon as possible. Therefore, we request that you quickly release LIHEAP funds and at as high of a level as possible in order to allow states and low-income households to prepare for the upcoming season.

We look forward to continuing to work with you on this critical program, and thank you for your attention to our concerns and those of our constituents.

Sincerely,

Jack Reed
United States Senator

Susan Collins
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Kelly Ayotte
United States Senator

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator

Patty Murray
United States Senator

Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

Carl Levin
United States Senator

Sheldon Whitehouse
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John D. Rockefeller IV
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Christopher A. Coons
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Patrick J. Leahy
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Debbie Stabenow
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Kirsten E. Gillibrand
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Jon Tester
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Barbara Boxer
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Heidi Heitkamp
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John Walsh
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Al Franken
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Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Cory Booker
United States Senator

Joe Manchin III
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Richard J. Durbin
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Brian Schatz
United States Senator

Tim Johnson
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Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

Mary Landrieu
United States Senator

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

Jeff Merkley
United States Senator

Tom Harkin
United States Senator

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator