

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 14, 1995

The Honorable William J. Clinton  
President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to ask you to immediately release emergency contingency funds for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in order to prevent millions of low-income families from suffering and being displaced from their homes this winter.

The failure to enact the Fiscal Year 1996 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill will result, within a very short period of time, in massive shortfalls in LIHEAP funding, and force many states to operate their programs on an emergency-only basis. As you may know, many of the coldest states draw down most, if not all, of their LIHEAP funds early in the fiscal year in an attempt to secure winter heating in the homes of their poorest residents.

Because the previous two continuing resolutions failed to take into account the need for cold weather states to immediately draw down their funds, many of the coldest states cannot operate their LIHEAP programs. As a result, unless you take emergency action, our states will only be able to provide heat to a fraction of the households in need of heating assistance this winter.


Last year, an estimated 6.1 million households received LIHEAP benefits. Three-quarters of those households had incomes of less than \$8,000 per year. The average LIHEAP family spent 18.4 percent of their income on the cost of home energy, compared with 6.7 percent for all households. Unless action is taken immediately, hundreds of thousands of Americans who live in the coldest states will be unable to heat their homes. We don't want to see families forced from their homes because of unpredictably cold weather.

By declaring the heating situation an emergency and releasing the available contingency funds to the coldest states immediately, you can delay a heating emergency, while negotiations continue on the final version of the FY96 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill.

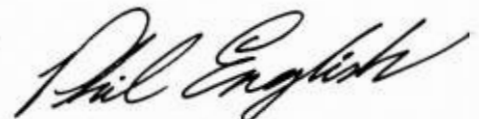
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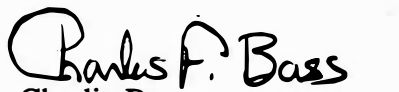
Furthermore, we urge you to support efforts to ensure that any future continuing resolution beyond December 15th will enable the coldest states to immediately draw down a substantial portion of their LIHEAP funds.


Sincerely,

  
Bernard Sanders  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

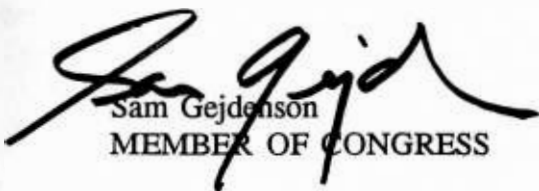
  
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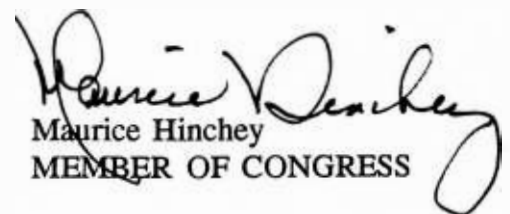
  
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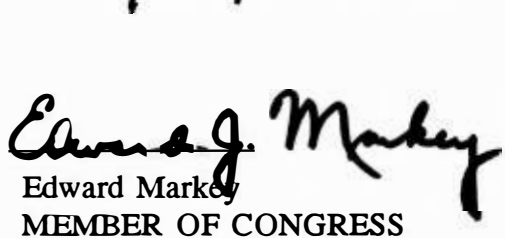
  
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