

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

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
322 Hart Office Building  
Washington DC, 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington DC, 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Speaker  
House of Representatives  
2468 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington DC, 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
House of Representatives  
2433 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington DC, 20515

February 24, 2023

Dear Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker McCarthy, and Minority Leader Jeffries:

We write to urge more funding be provided for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) as it is urgently needed. New Yorkers pay some of the highest prices in the country for heating costs, including record highs for heating oil. Recent cold storms have sent prices skyrocketing again.<sup>1</sup>

High energy prices continue to be a problem. From shortages to transportation issues and now increasing costs, New Yorkers are struggling to heat their homes. Our constituents face the difficult choice between heating their homes and paying for other everyday needs like groceries. Seniors and those families on fixed incomes are most directly impacted by these rising heating costs.

An estimated one million New Yorkers are eligible for LIHEAP but do not receive assistance due to it being underfunded, which is one of the highest underserved populations in the nation.<sup>2</sup> Supplemental LIHEAP funding would allow us to help many more seniors and families as costs rise and families struggle to keep up.

Increased funding will particularly help communities of color who disproportionately face high energy burdens – with Black households spending 32% more of their income on energy and Hispanic households spending 13% more of their income on energy than the median household.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Chunzi Xu, "Record Heating Oil Costs Jump in New York Ahead of Winter Storm," Bloomberg News, Jan. 25, 2023. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-01-25/record-heating-oil-costs-jump-in-new-york-ahead-of-winter-storm>

<sup>2</sup> Maria Castillom and Joe Daniel, "By the Numbers: Low Income Energy Assistance," RMI, Aug. 22, 2023. <https://rmi.org/by-the-numbers-low-income-energy-assistance/>

Only 45% of New York City households who qualify for LIHEAP received assistance from this vital program, including some public housing tenants who are very much in need of its help.<sup>4</sup>

As you know, LIHEAP benefits both homeowners and renters. And rural residents who live in Western New York or residents who live in the Upper Hudson region are paying some of the highest heating bills across the state. Costs for heating oil and kerosene, which is used in the rural parts of our state, have increased as much as twenty one percent and fifty-three percent respectively.<sup>5</sup> This funding would directly impact seniors whose fixed incomes force them to struggle to keep up with rising costs and inflation, and now higher heating bills.

We request an additional \$500 million for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program to expand assistance to families so they can keep warm this winter even if they are struggling financially.

Sincerely,



Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



Patrick Ryan  
Member of Congress



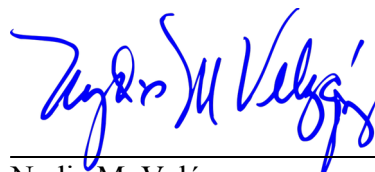
Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.  
Member of Congress



Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress

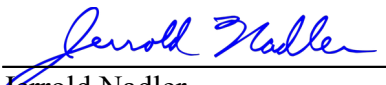


Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress

<sup>3</sup> Ariel Drehtobl, Lauren Ross, and Roxana Ayala, “How High Are Household Energy Burdens? An Assessment of National and Metropolitan Energy Burdens Across the United States”, American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy Report, 2020. <https://www.aceee.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/u2006.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Statistics Report December 2022 <https://otda.ny.gov/resources/caseload/2022/2022-12-stats.pdf>

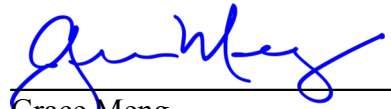
<sup>5</sup> New York State Energy Research and Development Authority: Average Home Heating Oil Prices and Dashboard <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/researchers-and-policy-makers/energy-prices/home-heating-oil/average-home-heating-oil-prices>



Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress



Brian Higgins  
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Grace Meng  
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Member of Congress