

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 848 Session of
2008

INTRODUCED BY WATERS, BISHOP, JAMES, MANDERINO, PRESTON,
BELFANTI, CALTAGIRONE, COHEN, CONKLIN, DALEY, FLECK, FRANKEL,
GEORGE, GIBBONS, GOODMAN, GRUCELA, HARKINS, HESS, KORTZ,
KOTIK, KULA, LONGIETTI, MANN, McCALL, McGEEHAN, MELIO,
MICOZZIE, R. MILLER, M. O'BRIEN, PAYNE, PETRARCA, PETRONE,
QUINN, READSHAW, REICHLEY, ROCK, SAYLOR, SCAVELLO, SEIP,
SIPTROTH, SOLOBAY, SURRA, SWANGER, VULAKOVICH, HENNESSEY,
HARHAI, WHEATLEY, MURT, JOSEPHS, BRENNAN, KIRKLAND AND
YUDICHAK, AUGUST 5, 2008

AS AMENDED, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the President and the Congress of the United States to
2 increase funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance
3 Program.

4 WHEREAS, The ~~Low-Income~~ LOW-INCOME Home Energy Assistance <—
5 Program (LIHEAP) was authorized by Title XXVI of the Omnibus
6 Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (Public Law 97-35, 95 Stat.
7 357) and began in 1982; and

8 WHEREAS, Its purpose is to assist low-income households,
9 particularly those under the poverty level, that pay a high
10 proportion of household income for home energy to meet immediate
11 home energy needs; and

12 WHEREAS, Federal dollars for LIHEAP are allocated by the
13 United States Department of Health and Human Services to the
14 states as a block grant and are disbursed under programs
15 designed by the individual states; and

1 WHEREAS, LIHEAP remains dependent on the Federal
2 appropriations process for its funding; and

3 WHEREAS, LIHEAP is administered at the state and county
4 levels by government agencies and implemented primarily at the
5 local level by community action programs (CAPS), local welfare
6 agencies and area agencies on aging; and

7 WHEREAS, In this Commonwealth LIHEAP is administered by the
8 Department of Public Welfare and consists of three components:
9 cash benefits to help eligible low-income households pay for
10 their home-heating fuel; crisis payments to resolve weather-
11 related, supply shortage and other household energy-related
12 emergencies; and energy conservation and weatherization measures
13 to address long-range solutions to the home-heating problems of
14 low-income households; and

15 WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is the leading petroleum-refining state
16 in the Northeast, and the Drake Well in Titusville,
17 Pennsylvania, was the world's first commercial oil well, and
18 western Pennsylvania was the site of the world's first oil boom;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, According to the annual Home Energy Affordability
21 Gap report, Pennsylvania, along with much of the Northeast, is
22 vulnerable to distillate fuel oil shortages and price spikes
23 during winter months due to high demand for home heating; and

24 WHEREAS, More than one-fourth of Pennsylvania households rely
25 on fuel oil as their primary energy source for home heating; and

26 WHEREAS, In 2006, Pennsylvania provided over 350,000
27 households with financial heating assistance, which is
28 approximately 44% of the 800,300 eligible households in the
29 State; and

30 WHEREAS, Families in this Commonwealth receiving LIHEAP

1 assistance have incomes below 150% of the Federal poverty level;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, According to the Campaign for Home Energy
4 Assistance, while the residential energy burden for all United
5 States households in 2001 was 7% of their income, for LIHEAP
6 recipient households the residential energy burden was 17.2%,
7 nearly 2.5 times the average burden; and

8 WHEREAS, Fifteen percent of LIHEAP grant funding is allocated
9 to weatherization efforts; and

10 WHEREAS, The Statewide waiting list for weatherization
11 services is approximately 1.5 times the program's annual number
12 of homes weatherized and is growing by approximately 400
13 households per year; and

14 WHEREAS, RECENT RISING ENERGY COSTS AND SLOW ECONOMIC
15 CONDITIONS RENDER IT CRUCIAL THAT ANY POTENTIAL FOR FRAUD WITHIN
16 THE LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BE ELIMINATED; AND

17 WHEREAS, LIHEAP has nurtured an effective partnership between
18 the Federal Government, state governments and the private
19 sector; therefore be it

20 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
21 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the President and the Congress
22 of the United States to increase LIHEAP funding; and be it
23 further

24 RESOLVED, THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PUT IN PLACE MEASURES
25 TO PREVENT FRAUD WITHIN THE PROGRAM OR DIRECT THE STATES TO
26 ENACT FRAUD PREVENTION MEASURES THAT COULD INCLUDE ESTABLISHING
27 VERIFICATION AND/OR PHOTO IDENTIFICATION SYSTEMS FOR THOSE
28 RECEIVING ASSISTANCE UNDER THE LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE
29 PROGRAM; AND BE IT FURTHER

30 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to

1 the President of the United States, to the presiding officers of
2 each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from
3 Pennsylvania.