

# neuac

## The National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition

### **LIHEAP needs at least \$4.7 billion in FY16**

### **Federal Funding Down More Than One-Third From FY10 to FY15**

Fiscal Year	National Total
2016 (President)	\$3.39 billion*
2015	\$3.39 billion
2014	\$3.42 billion
2013	\$3.25 billion
2012	\$3.47 billion
2011	\$4.71 billion
2010	\$5.10 billion

\*Administration's \$3.39 billion FY16 request withholds \$200 million nationally for new competitive grants.

	Households Eligible (5 yr. avg)	Households Served (FY14)	% Households NOT Served (FY14)
United States	34,952,312	6,803,652	80.5%

LIHEAP Clearinghouse and State Reports. Eligible data reflects latest 5-year census estimate of LIHEAP eligible households under the federal maximum.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides critical home heating and cooling help to millions of vulnerable American families. After long underfunding LIHEAP, Congress appropriated \$5.1 billion for the program in FY09 and FY10, and \$4.7 billion in FY11. Since then, funding has fallen to \$3.39 billion in FY15. As a result, 1.1 million eligible US households are not receiving assistance each year, and individual grants have been reduced. This is occurring even while the numbers of at-risk households remain virtually unchanged from at their all-time highs.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Why Fund LIHEAP at \$4.7 Billion?**

##### **LIHEAP Is Not An Entitlement:**

Unlike entitlement programs that receive funding increases with growth in the eligible population, LIHEAP is funded by the annual congressional appropriations process. While states set eligibility rates, the income *maximum* is 150 percent of the federal poverty guideline or 60 percent of a state's median income. (For example, 150 percent of the FY16 poverty guideline for a family of three is \$30,135.<sup>2</sup>) Most LIHEAP recipients earn much less than the maximum thresholds.

##### **The Need For LIHEAP Is Growing:**

In 2014, the national poverty rate was 14.8 percent and 46.7 million Americans lived in poverty. These numbers are virtually unchanged from their all-time US highs.<sup>3</sup>

##### **LIHEAP Prioritizes Vulnerable Households:**

State LIHEAP administrators report that nearly 90 percent of LIHEAP recipient households had at least one vulnerable person – a senior age 60 or older, a child under 18, or an individual with a disability.<sup>4</sup>

##### **LIHEAP Helps Veterans:**

US LIHEAP recipient households containing a veteran jumped more than 150 percent over three years – from about 700,000 in FY08 to 1.78 million in FY11.<sup>5</sup>

**NEUAC's Recommendation to Congress: NEUAC urges Congress to restore LIHEAP to at least \$4.7 billion, to concentrate funds in base grants, and reject efforts that siphon appropriated funds from LIHEAP's core energy-assistance mission.**

<sup>1</sup> US Census Bureau: "Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014" <http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf>; NEADA Purchasing Power Table <http://neada.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/purchasingpower201412614.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> LIHEAP IM 2015-03 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/liheap-hhs-poverty-guidelines-for-optional-use-in-ffy-2015-and-mandatory-use-in-ffy-2016>

<sup>3</sup> "Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014" <http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> "2011 National Energy Assistance Survey Summary Report" [http://neada.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/FINAL\\_NEADA\\_2011\\_Summary\\_Report1.pdf](http://neada.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/FINAL_NEADA_2011_Summary_Report1.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> "LIHEAP Recipients by Veteran Status" [http://neada.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/LIHEAP\\_Veteran\\_Study\\_V3.pdf](http://neada.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/LIHEAP_Veteran_Study_V3.pdf)