

BRIAN HIGGINS  
27TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
BORDER AND MARITIME SECURITY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COUNTERTERRORISM  
AND INTELLIGENCE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE  
MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM,  
NONPROLIFERATION AND TRADE

REVITALIZING OLDER CITIES  
TASK FORCE  
CO-CHAIR

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-3227**

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
2459 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3306  
(202) 226-0347 (FAX)

WESTERN NEW YORK OFFICES:  
LARKIN BUILDING  
726 EXCHANGE STREET  
SUITE 601  
BUFFALO, NY 14210  
(716) 852-3501  
(716) 852-3929 (FAX)

FENTON BUILDING  
2 EAST 2ND STREET  
SUITE 300  
JAMESTOWN, NY 14701  
(716) 484-0729  
(716) 484-1049 (FAX)  
higgins.house.gov

October 19, 2011

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-307, The Capitol  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Norman D. Dicks  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Denny Rehberg  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services and Education  
H-307, The Capitol  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Norman D. Dicks  
Ranking Member  
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1016 Longworth House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Dicks, Chairman Rehberg and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I write to express my strong concern regarding the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding level and formula allocation in the House draft Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.

As you know, in FY 2011 Congress allocated \$4.7 billion in LIHEAP funding, \$521.9 million of which went to households in need of this vital assistance to heat their homes in New York State. In May, I joined 90 of my colleagues in urging the committee to provide the FY 2010 level of \$5.1 billion in FY 2012 funding to ensure these families receive the aid they need so they can stay healthy and secure during the cold winters we experience in our region of the country.

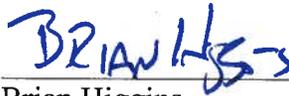
Yet despite the strong need and increased demand for LIHEAP, the House draft bill proposes just \$3.39 billion to LIHEAP in FY 2012, reducing funding by \$1.3 billion or 28% from FY 2011 levels. Furthermore, it changes the formula used over the past several years, causing a dramatic difference in the outcomes for communities in the Northeast. New York, for example, would have its funding cut \$178.9 million, or 34%, from current levels.

Additionally, the damage done by the inadequate funding is compounded by the formula change proposed in the House version of the bill. The new formula will result in New York receiving \$33 million less than it would under the formula used by Congress in recent years.

Given the economic downturn and continued high energy prices, these cuts to New York families, persons with disabilities and seniors are unacceptable. While I am aware that the current budget constraints require tough decisions, LIHEAP is an essential program that meets the basic needs of our most vulnerable populations. Accordingly, I strongly urge you to restore this funding to FY11 levels or at the least \$3.4 billion, with the funding allocated by the formula in the Senate version of the bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "BRIAN HIGGINS". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress