

As Winter Approaches, Durbin, Duckworth Join Bipartisan Letter Urging Biden Administration To Help Reduce Energy Costs

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) joined a group of 26 lawmakers, led by U.S. Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), in sending a bipartisan [letter](#) calling on the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the U.S. Department of

Health and Human Services (HHS) to take additional steps to reduce energy costs for Americans through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

LIHEAP is a federally funded program that helps low-income households with their home energy bills by providing payment or energy crisis assistance.

In a letter to OMB Director Shalanda Young and HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra, the 28 Senators urged the Biden Administration to include supplemental LIHEAP funding in any additional request submitted for Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations.

“Amid increased energy prices resulting from Russia’s war in Ukraine and inflationary pressures, LIHEAP has become even more important for helping families pay their energy bills without foregoing other essentials,” the 28 Senators wrote.

They continued, “Unfortunately, supplemental funding is needed once again as we head into another winter heating season. Winter heating prices are expected to remain roughly as high as last year, and LIHEAP applications are up significantly. According to the National Energy Assistance Directors’ Association, states are reporting increases of up to 20% in the number of LIHEAP applications since last year. With limited funding, states will face tough choices about the amount of assistance they can provide and the number of people they can serve.”

LIHEAP is administered by states and accessed through local Community Action Agencies. Eligibility for LIHEAP is based on income, family size, and the availability of resources. Nationwide, an estimated six million households received assistance with heating and cooling costs through LIHEAP over the last year.

Durbin and Duckworth have long been advocates of LIHEAP. In March, Durbin and Duckworth [announced](#) more than \$51.8 million in federal funding from LIHEAP to support Illinoisans in paying the rising cost of home heating bills during winter. In Fiscal Year 2023, Illinois received nearly \$260 million in LIHEAP funding.

In addition to Durbin, Duckworth, Reed, and Murkowski, the letter was signed by U.S. Senators Angus King (I-ME), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Edward Markey (D-MA), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Robert Casey (D-PA), Christopher Murphy (D-CT), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Michael Bennett (D-CO), Christopher Coons (D-DE), Gary Peters (D-MI), Tina Smith (D-MN), Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Peter Welch (D-VT), Mark Warner (D-VA), Jon Tester (D-MT), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), and Bernard Sanders (I-VT).

Full text of the [letter](#).