

Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

As lawmakers representing Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, we are reaching out to express concern about the termination of staff in a government office critical to keeping the heat on for vulnerable families around the region. The April 1st, 2025 lay-offs of the entire staff of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) places the efficient disbursement of these life-saving funds at risk.

LIHEAP is one of the most critical components of the social safety net that is provided by the federal government and distributed by the states. The program provides funding and distribution support serving roughly 6.7 million households across the nation. The program has been supporting vulnerable households for over 40 years, ensuring millions of dollars of utility bill assistance is delivered to each and every state. Congress appropriated \$4.1 billion to the program in FY2024. Every state in the nation received between \$11 million and \$400 million of critical support for families. The current appropriation will be exhausted in September of this year, and major disruptions will occur if there remains no funding to administer the program.

The LIHEAP program ensures that households experiencing hardship are able to prevent utility shutoffs, retain assistance for heating and cooling bills, and gain access to critical repairs and replacements of heating, cooling, and water heating systems. The households served range from senior citizens on fixed incomes and urban dwellers with poorly weatherized homes, to disabled individuals who depend on continuous electric service to power essential health equipment and rural families who rely on heating support to survive cold winters. Of the households served by the program in 2024, 996,000 included a young child, 2.1 million included someone with a disability, and 2.4 million included a senior citizen.

Furthermore, in a time where many families are battling with the rising costs of energy and fuel due to grid mismanagement, utility rate abuse, and extreme weather-related supply chain disruptions, social safety nets such as LIHEAP are more important than ever for low-and-moderate income Americans.

We, the undersigned legislators, are calling for a reinstatement of the essential workers who staff the federal LIHEAP program and coordinate with state governments and the private sector to provide these critical resources. To disrupt the LIHEAP program would be to jeopardize the most vulnerable Americans and cause major disruptions to critical resources for our constituents. We are calling for you, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, to ensure the remaining \$378 million of your congressional appropriation to the program will be delivered to Americans with proper administrative support from a fully operational staff and to take action to ensure this vital program survives the staffing cuts wielded by the executive branch.

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Maryland House of Delegates, District 18

Delegate Andre Johnson
Maryland House of Delegates, District 34A

Delegate Adrian Boaf
Maryland House of Delegates, District 23

Delegate Andrea Fletcher Harrison
Maryland House of Delegates, District 24

Delegate Ashanti Martinez

Maryland House of Delegates, District 22

Senator Benjamin Brooks

Maryland State Senate, District 10

Delegate Bonnie Cullison

Maryland House of Delegates, District 19

Senator Brian Feldman

Maryland State Senate, District 15

Delegate C.T. Wilson

Maryland House of Delegates, District 28

Senator Carl Jackson

Maryland State Senate, District 8

Delegate Cathi Forbes

Maryland House of Delegates, District 43B

Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield

Maryland House of Delegates, District 19

Senator Cheryl Kagan

Maryland State Senate, District 17

Delegate Cheryl Pasteur

Maryland House of Delegates, District 11A

Senator Clarence Lam

Maryland State Senate, District 12

Senator Dalya Attar

Maryland State Senate, District 41

Delegate Dana Jones

Maryland House of Delegates, District 30A

Delegate Dana Stein

Maryland House of Delegates, District 11B

Delegate Deni Taveras

Maryland House of Delegates, District 47B

Delegate Diana Fennell

Maryland House of Delegates, District 47A

Delegate Edith Patterson

Maryland House of Delegates, District 28

Delegate Dylan Behler

Maryland House of Delegates, District 30A

Delegate Elizabeth Embry

Maryland House of Delegates, District 43A

Delegate Gary Simmons

Maryland House of Delegates, District 12B

Delegate Greg Wims

Maryland House of Delegates, District 39

Delegate Heather Bagnall

Maryland House of Delegates, District 33C

Delegate Jazz Lewis

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Delegate Jared Solomon

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Senator Jeff Waldstreicher

Maryland State Senate, District 18

Delegate Jen Terrasa

Maryland House of Delegates, District 13

Delegate Jennifer White Holland

Maryland House of Delegates, District 10

Delegate Jessica Feldmark

Maryland House of Delegates, District 12A

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Senator Jim Rosapepe

Maryland State Senate, District 21

Delegate Joe Vogel

Maryland House of Delegates, District 17

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Maryland House of Delegates, District 21

Delegate Julie Palakovich Carr

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Maryland House of Delegates, District 3

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Maryland House of Delegates, District 3A

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Maryland House of Delegates, District 25

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Maryland House of Delegates, District 35B

Delegate Kris Fair

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Maryland House of Delegates, District 39

Delegate Lily Qi

Maryland House of Delegates, District 15

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Maryland House of Delegates, District 15

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Maryland House of Delegates, District 46

Delegate Mark Chang

Maryland House of Delegates, District 32

Delegate Mary Lehman

Maryland House of Delegates, District 21

Delegate Melissa Wells

Maryland House of Delegates, District 40

Delegate Michael Rogers

Maryland House of Delegates, District 32

Delegate Natalie Ziegler

Maryland House of Delegates, District 9A

Delegate Nick Allen

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Senator Pamela Beidle

Maryland State Senate, District 32

Delegate Robbyn Lewis

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Delegate Ryan Spiegel

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Delegate Teresa Woorman

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Delegate Terri Hill

Maryland House of Delegates, District 12A

Delegate Vaughn Stewart

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Maryland State Senate, District 20

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D.C. Council, Ward 1

Councilmember Charles Allen

D.C. Council, Ward 6

Councilmember Robert White

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Virginia House of Delegates, District 2

Delegate Alfonso Lopez

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Delegate Atoosa Reaser

Virginia House of Delegates, District 27

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Senator Dave Marsden

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Virginia House of Delegates, District 11

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Virginia House of Delegates, District 76

Delegate Elizabeth Bennett-Parker

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Virginia House of Delegates, District 84

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Delegate Phil Hernandez

Virginia House of Delegates, District 94

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Senate of Virginia, District 11

Delegate Rae C. Cousins

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Delegate Richard (Rip) Sullivan

Virginia House of Delegates, District 6

Senator Saddam Salim

Senate of Virginia, District 37

Delegate Sam Rasoul

Virginia House of Delegates, District 38

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Senate of Virginia, District 16

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Senate of Virginia, District 34

Senator Jennifer B. Boysko

Senate of Virginia, District 33

Delegate Shelly Simonds

Virginia House of Delegates, District 70

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Senate of Virginia, District 36