

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 15-0262R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmember Holton, President Young, Councilmembers Costello,
Middleton, Henry, Stokes, Kraft, Welch, Spector, Clarke, Scott, Curran, Mosby, Reisinger,
Branch
Introduced and adopted: September 21, 2015

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

**Request for Federal Action - Increasing the Low Income Home
Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Funding**

FOR the purpose of urging the President of the United States and the members of the U.S. House
and Senate Appropriations Committees to increase the Low Income Home Energy Assistance
Program (LIHEAP) funding to no less than \$4.7 billion to ensure greater protections for
minority, low- and fixed-income households that are struggling to pay their energy bills.

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

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

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

WHEREAS, LIHEAP is not an entitlement and accordingly remains dependent on the Federal
appropriations process for its funding; and

WHEREAS, LIHEAP is administered at the state and county levels by government agencies
and implemented primarily at the local level by Community Action Programs (CAPs), local
welfare agencies, and area agencies on aging; and

WHEREAS, Even though the number of households eligible for the LIHEAP program
continues to exceed those receiving assistance, this funding has been a lifeline during the
economic downturn, helping to ensure that people do not have to choose between paying their
energy bills and paying for food or medicine; and

WHEREAS, The number of households eligible for LIHEAP has increased, but only one in
five eligible households nationwide actually get the benefits; and

WHEREAS, Federal law requires that families receiving LIHEAP assistance have incomes
below 150% of the Federal poverty level or 60% of the state median income; and

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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1 **WHEREAS**, The increasing poverty rate coupled with underfunding of energy assistance
2 programs could potentially increase arrearages, thus creating a more tenuous situation for
3 families that are unable to pay their bills; and

4 **WHEREAS**, The LIHEAP program budget has been cut by \$1.7 billion – a decrease of more
5 than one-third between 2009 to 2014; and

6 **WHEREAS**, The \$3.4 billion allocated for Fiscal Year 2015 is far less than the \$4.7 billion
7 requested from Members of Congress, Mayors from 20 states, utility companies, and advocates
8 for the poor.

9 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE**, That this Body
10 urges the President of the United States and the members of the U.S. House and Senate
11 Appropriations Committees to increase LIHEAP funding to no less than \$4.7 billion to ensure
12 greater protections for minority, low- and fixed-income households that are struggling to pay
13 their energy bills.

14 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the President of the
15 United States, the Vice President of the United States, Members of Congress, the House and
16 Senate Leadership, the Baltimore City Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly, the
17 Baltimore City Department of Housing, the Housing Authority of Baltimore City, and the
18 Mayor’s Office of Intergovernmental Affairs.