



City of Baltimore

City Council
City Hall, Room 408
100 North Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY*

CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL R
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Holton

A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

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

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

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

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That this Body urges the President of the United States and the members of the U.S. House and Senate Appropriations Committees to increase 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.

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

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