



Issue Snapshot: Low Income Heating Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Background: During tough economic times, LIHEAP has never been more important for the protection of millions of struggling families. LIHEAP is an efficient and highly effective program which delivers critical short-term seasonal aid to our most vulnerable neighbors, especially the elderly, many of who are on fixed incomes. In addition to its concentration on the elderly, young families and the disabled, studies now show that 20 percent of LIHEAP recipients are veterans; some are even on active duty service to our nation.

New York Facts:

- In 2011, NY LIHEAP provided **1,497,508 households with LIHEAP financial assistance** (There are 2.5 million eligible households in the state).
- NY families receiving LIHEAP assistance have incomes below 150 percent of the federal poverty level. **The majority falls well below the cap.**
- In the 2011/2012 season, Con Edison distributed \$4,745,464 in benefits to 35,422 customers in our service territory.

Funding Status:

The appropriation for LIHEAP in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 is \$3.47 billion. This figure compares to the funding of FY 2009 and 2010 of \$5.1 billion. In February, the President requested \$3.02 billion for LIHEAP in FY 2013. The impact of this proposed cut would be severe. It would compound the effect of cuts from FY 2009-10's \$5.1 billion to FY2012's \$3.47 billion. Presently, LIHEAP funding is believed to assist about 8.9 million households or approximately 23 million Americans.

On June 14, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its FY2013 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill. The Committee provided the LIHEAP program with \$3.47 billion in funding (\$3.37 b in formula and \$100 m in contingency). The proposed House bill also includes \$3.4 billion in funding, albeit through a slightly different formula.

Congress will not be able to pass individual spending bills – including the Labor-HHS appropriations bill – prior to the end of the fiscal year. As a result, both the House and Senate have agreed in principle to a 6-month extension for funding government programs (Congress is expected to approve the extension in September). It will be up to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to determine how much and under which formula to release LIHEAP funding this winter. OMB will likely base its release on the House and Senate's \$3.4 billion proposal.

Company Position: Con Edison supports restoring LIHEAP funding to at least \$5.1 billion in FY 2013. This will allow states and their charitable partners to continue serving some the nation's neediest households within this still-fragile economy and time of unusually high unemployment.

In addition to sending letters of support to appropriators, Con Edison has participated in Winter and Summer LIHEAP Action Days. Most recently, the groups collectively visited over 150 Congressional offices.