

# News

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## **American Public Gas Association Calls Upon Congress and President to Approve LIHEAP Funding Bill**

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Washington, D.C. – Upon returning next week, APGA urges Congress and the Administration to work quickly towards final passage of the FY 2008 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill. The bill includes \$2,411,585,000 in critical funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

While this bill is a step in the right direction, APGA has pushed for full funding, \$5.1 billion, for LIHEAP. According to Bert Kalisch, President & CEO for APGA, “The demand for assistance is clear. As we approach this winter season, APGA urges Congress to work quickly and ensure that low and fixed income families have the resources available to help meet their energy needs. LIHEAP assistance is critical to the many Americans who will face the difficult choice this winter between paying their heating bill or for other necessities such as prescription drugs, food and childcare.”

Funds provided by LIHEAP play a vital role in helping low-income families meet their energy needs. Currently, LIHEAP reaches only approximately 15% of the 30 million households that are eligible for assistance. Since 1981, the number of households eligible for LIHEAP assistance has grown, while the number of households served has declined.

The LIHEAP funding level provided in the bill includes \$1.98 billion in base funding and \$431.6 million in emergency funds. The base funding level provided is identical to that provided last year but the bill does include an increase in approximately \$250 in emergency funds. Emergency funds are only released upon a request by the Administration.

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APGA is the national association of municipally and publicly-owned local distribution systems. There are about 1000 public gas systems serving more than five million customers. These public gas utilities are not-for-profit retail distribution entities that are owned by, and accountable to, the citizens they serve. They include municipal gas distribution systems, public utility districts, county districts, and other public agencies that have natural gas distribution facilities.