

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 4, 2006

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to urge you to release all remaining Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) contingency funds to help provide cooling assistance to low-income families this summer.

According to NOAA meteorologists, an unusually strong ridge of high pressure that has been persistent for the last several weeks across much of the central and eastern U.S. is causing record high temperatures nationwide this summer. More than 50 new all-time high temperature records were established during the last two weeks. The persistence of the unusually hot temperatures has made the past month one of the warmest since records began in 1895 for the contiguous United States. The current heat wave sweeping the country has resulted in more than 160 deaths in California alone.

These searing temperatures, combined with record high electricity prices across the country, are putting many low-income families at risk for heat-related illnesses because they cannot afford the cost of electricity to cool their homes.

Many low-income families do not have adequate resources to pay their energy bills this summer. LIHEAP can provide life-saving assistance to provide air-conditioning and fans to the elderly and disabled.

Public health studies have documented that summer heat and heat waves can worsen cardiovascular disease (ischemic heart disease), increasing the risk of death from heart attack or stroke, and for those with respiratory diseases there is a greater risk of death from pneumonia and other ailments. Summer heat can also lead to hospitalization for those with pre-existing kidney disease, Type 2 diabetes, and epilepsy. These conditions can be mitigated by access to cooling during the summer months.

Your release of all remaining contingency funds to help provide cooling assistance is imperative to help in the effort to safeguard the health—and the lives—of low-income families across the nation.

We thank you for your prompt attention to this critical request.

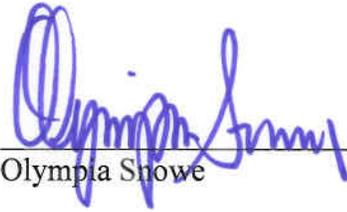
Sincerely,


Jack Reed


Susan M. Collins



Edward M. Kennedy



Olympia Snowe



James M. Jeffords



Herb Kohl



Barbara A. Mikulski



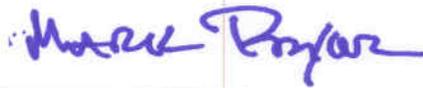
Mike DeWine



Richard Durbin



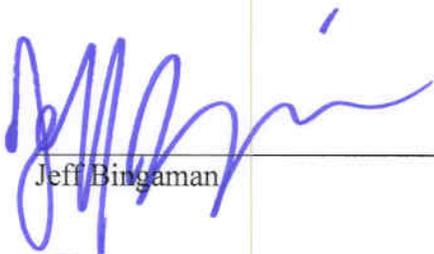
Arlen Specter



Mark L. Pryor



Patrick J. Leahy



Jeff Bingaman



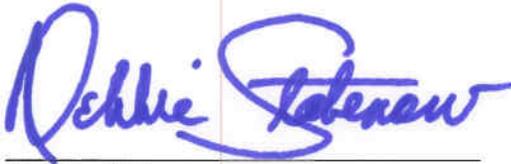
Hillary Rodham Clinton



Christopher J. Dodd



Paul S. Sarbanes



Debbie Stabenow



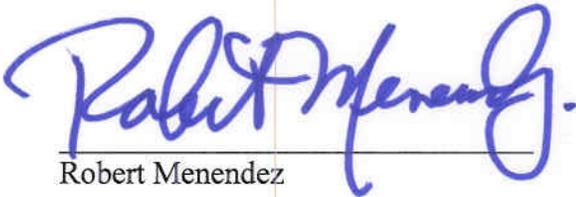
Frank R. Lautenberg



Joseph R. Biden, Jr.



Carl Levin



Robert Menendez



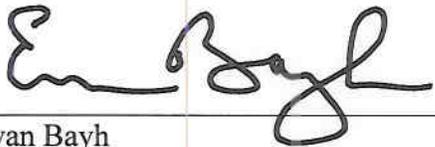
Barack Obama



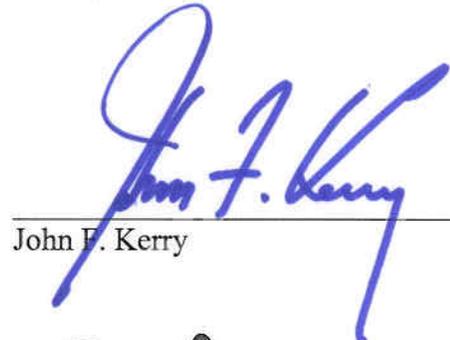
Joseph I. Lieberman



Charles E. Schumer



Evan Bayh



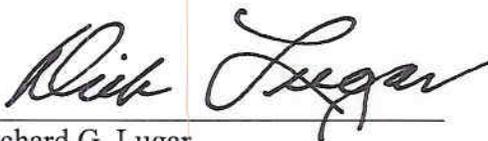
John F. Kerry



Mark Dayton



Lincoln Chafee



Richard G. Lugar



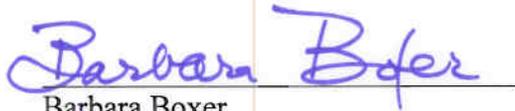
Blanche L. Lincoln



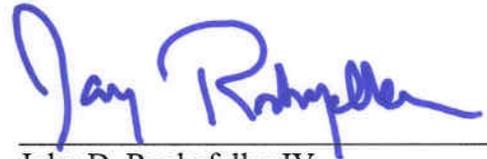
Rick Santorum



Russell D. Feingold



Barbara Boxer



John D. Rockefeller IV



Ken Salazar



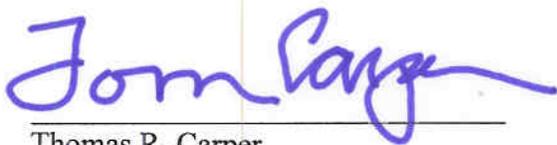
Mary L. Landrieu



Norm Coleman



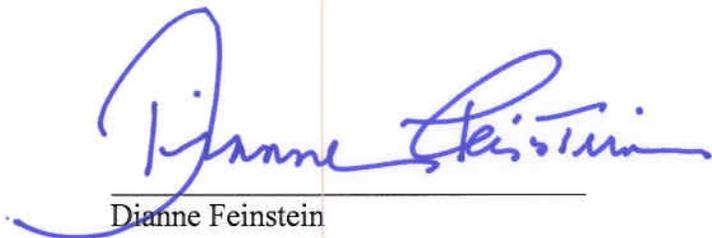
Ron Wyden



Thomas R. Carper



Byron L. Dorgan



Dianne Feinstein



Tom Harkin



Christopher S. Bond