



January 27, 2016

Senator Beth Bye and Rep. Toni E. Walker, Chairs, Appropriations Committee  
Senator Robert Kane and Rep. Melissa Ziobron, Ranking Members, Appropriations Committee  
Appropriations Committee, Room 2700

Senator Paul Doyle and Rep. Lonnie Reed, Chairs, Energy & Technology Committee  
Senator Paul Formica and Rep. Tim Ackert, Ranking Members, Energy & Technology  
Committee  
Energy & Technology Committee, Room 3900

Senator Marilyn Moore and Rep. Catherine Abercrombie, Chairs, Human Services Committee  
Senator Joe Markley and Rep. Terrie Wood, Ranking Members, Human Services Committee  
Human Services Committee, Room 2000

Legislative Office Building  
300 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

Please see the attached Report of the Low-Income Energy Advisory Board (LIEAB) titled  
Recommendations to Improve the Implementation of Heating Assistance Programs in  
Connecticut.

According to Section 16a-41b of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Commissioner of Energy  
and Environmental Protection, or his or her designee, shall provide notice of meetings to the  
members of the Low-Income Energy Advisory Board, provide space for such meetings, maintain  
minutes and publish reports of the board.

We hope you find the attached information helpful.

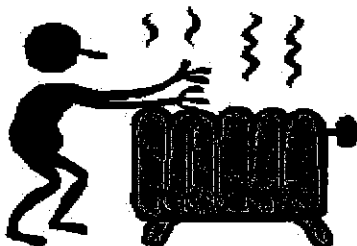
Sincerely,

Robert J. Klee  
Commissioner  
Department of Energy and  
Environmental Protection



REPORT OF THE  
LOW-INCOME ENERGY ADVISORY BOARD  
(LIEAB)

Recommendations to Improve the Implementation  
of Heating Assistance Programs in Connecticut



Patricia Wrice, Chair

Low Income Energy Advisory Board

SUBMITTED TO THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES OF THE  
CONNECTICUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES

Appropriations  
Energy and Technology  
Human Services

January 2016

## LIEAB MEMBERS

2015-2016

Chairperson	<i>Patricia Wrice</i>
Vice-chairperson	<i>Nora Duncan</i>
Secretary	<i>Gail Lucchina</i>
<b>Voting Members (<i>Representatives and Designees</i>)</b>	
Commission on Aging	<i>Julia Evans Starr</i>
United Illuminating Company	<i>Kathleen Wasilnak</i>
Eversource Energy -Electric	<i>Veronica Gomez-Hernandez</i>
Connecticut Natural Gas Corporation	<i>Dalyn Delgado</i>
The Southern Connecticut Gas Company	<i>Cherlynn Villano</i>
Eversource Energy -Gas	<i>Eddie Swift</i>
Public Utilities Regulatory Authority	<i>Frank Augeri</i>
Office of Consumer Counsel	<i>Margaret Bain</i>
Operation Fuel Executive Director	<i>Patricia Wrice (Brenda Watson)</i>
United Way of CT, 2-11 President & CEO	<i>Richard Porth (Kate Quigley)</i>
Connecticut Local Administrators of Social Services	<i>Camilla Jones (Joy Hollister)</i>
Legal Assistance Resource Center Director	<i>Wendy Wanchak</i>
Connecticut AARP President	<i>Nora Duncan</i>
Norwich Public Utilities	<i>Jeff Brining</i>
Connecticut Energy Marketers Association	<i>Chris Herb</i>
Connecticut Association for Community Action	<i>Edith Karsky</i>
<b>Nonvoting Members (<i>Designees</i>)</b>	
Office of Policy & Management	<i>Kelly Sinko</i>
Department of Social Services	<i>Carlene Taylor</i>
Department of Energy & Environmental Protection	<i>Gail Lucchina</i>

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Charge

The Low Income Energy Advisory Board (LIEAB) was charged by the 2015 General Assembly, through an amendment to *C.G.S Section 16a-41b*, subsection (e) with . . . “devising recommendations to improve the implementation of heating assistance programs, particularly those created to benefit low-income households, through coordination and optimization of existing energy efficiency and energy assistance programs.”

The bill language states:

(NEW) (e) The Low-Income Energy Advisory Board shall convene and devise recommendations to improve the implementation of heating assistance programs, particularly those created to benefit low-income households, through coordination and optimization of existing energy efficiency and energy assistance programs. Such recommendations shall consider: (1) How the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), community action agencies, as defined by section 17b-885, electric distribution companies, as defined by section 16-1, as amended by this act, and municipal electric utilities, as defined by section 7-233b, can securely share heating assistance program applicant data, with respect to customer energy usage levels, past participation and eligibility for energy assistance and energy efficiency programs, and other data deemed relevant to improve coordination among such program and program administrators; (2) the costs and benefits of current energy assistance and energy efficiency programs, and how to maximize customer benefits through such customers’ anticipation in any combination of energy assistance and energy efficiency programs; (3) how to streamline the application process for energy assistance and energy efficiency program applicants and the possible development of joint electronic applications; (4) how to make energy assistance and energy efficiency programs more accessible and feasible for tenants in rental housing units, including, but not limited to, how to best secure landlord permission for such services; and (5) coordination efforts to best improve boiler and furnace replacement program. Not later than January 1, 2016, the Low-Income Energy Advisory Board shall report such recommendations, in accordance with section 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to energy, appropriations and human services.

## EXISTING ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

### *Energy Assistance (EA) Programs*

1. **LIHEAP Block Grant – Administered by DSS**
2. **Utility Payment and Shut-Off Protection Programs**
3. **Operation Fuel**
4. **Local Charities**
5. **Others**

#### 1. **LIHEAP Block Grant.**

The Department of Social Services (DSS) is the grantee for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) block grant that is funded by the federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The program is administered as the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) and DSS contracts with the Community Action Agency (CAA) network to provide services statewide. This program is the major funding source in Connecticut that assists eligible households –up to 60% of the state median income – with their primary heating costs. This block grant is the primary source of energy affordability assistance in the State, but still only helps with about 14% of the total dollars that vulnerable households are unable to pay for their home energy annually.<sup>1</sup> Reliance on federal funding, which is uncertain, hinders planning for energy assistance programs.

The FFY 2016 LIHEAP block grant is estimated to be \$81.4 million for Connecticut. States are allowed to carry forward up to 10% of its allocation from one funding year to the next. Based on the final expenditures for FFY 2015, the carry forward is estimated to be approximately \$8 million, which will be available for program services in FFY 2016. States are allowed to allocate up to 10% of the annual grant for administrative costs.

The LIHEAP block grant program has not funded a heating system repair/replacement program since 2008. The current LIHEAP plan, however, includes a set aside of \$1.5 million for a heating system repair/replacement program and is anticipated to serve approximately 250 eligible households. When

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<sup>1</sup> *Home Energy Affordability Gap: CT (2015) Report*, prepared by Rodger D. Colton of Fisher, Sheehan & Colton, Public Finance and General Economics, Belmont, MA (Prepared for *Operation Fuel*)

the funding commitment reaches \$1 million, the balance of \$500,000 will be available only for vulnerable households<sup>2</sup>.

FFY 2015 Expenditures:

\$68,100,100	(Program Services)
2,201,000	(Standard Utility Allowance Payments) see below “Heat & Eat”
	LIHEAP SNAP
8,402,518	(Administration)
<u>1,000,000</u>	<u>(Assurance 16)</u>
<b>\$79,703,618</b>	<b>(Total estimated expenditures)</b> without carry-over funding for FFY 15 – FFY16

Application Process: DSS contracts with CAAs to help administer the CEAP program. Five CAAs also administer the federally funded Department of Energy (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) under a plan developed by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). The CAAs process all applications for both the CEAP and WAP programs (written and electronic).

A single application is completed for both the CEAP and the WAP programs (*C.G.S. Sec. 16a-41*), but the utility ratepayer, energy efficiency program Home Energy Solutions-Income Eligible (HES-IE), see below, requires a separate application. There is a network of approximately 175 sites including municipal social service and community offices and senior centers accepting applications though all applications are processed by the CAAs. The CAAs enter and process all applications electronically using either *Captain* or *Fuelware* software.

As part of its effort to ensure that CEAP benefits are only provided to eligible households, CAAs have inquiry access to the DSS computer Eligibility Management System (EMS).

Some households are categorically eligible for CEAP energy assistance benefits based upon income<sup>3</sup> alone but must meet other eligibility requirements through the application process. The CEAP application process does not specifically identify households that are categorically eligible for winter shut-off protection, special payment programs, and free energy efficiency (conservation) assistance.

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<sup>2</sup> The 2015/2016 LIHEAP Allocation Plan defines a vulnerable household as “any household in which one or more members is either elderly (defined as 60 years of age or older), disabled or under the age of six.”

<sup>3</sup> At or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL): \$17,505 for a household of 1; \$29,685 for a household of 3.



Energy assistance and WAP benefits are awarded to eligible low-income households at the conclusion of the application process which includes an in-person interview. Eligibility/income criteria must be verified and documentation of any liquid assets is required before a household is awarded energy assistance benefits.

Once the CAA has determined eligibility for the household, an award letter is issued to the household if it is eligible for a “Basic Benefit” or “Rental Assistance Benefit.” The household is also notified if it is income-eligible for DOE WAP.

## **2. Standard Utility Allowance Benefit**

LIHEAP benefits are available to Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) households who do not make direct-to-vendor payments for their primary source of heat (*e.g.* heat may be included in the rent), have a shelter and/or utility obligation, and pay less than 30 percent of their gross income toward rent. These households receive the lowest LIHEAP payment because they have the lowest energy burden.

Eligible households receive a direct cash benefit in the amount of \$20.01. This benefit is issued by DSS to all eligible households. Receipt of the LIHEAP SNAP benefit qualifies the household to have its SNAP benefits recalculated, using the maximum Heating/Cooling Standard Utility Allowance (SUA).<sup>4</sup>

For most households the SUA recalculation will result in increased SNAP benefits.

This benefit is automatically provided annually to SNAP recipient households that meet the above requirements.

FFY 2014 Expenditures: \$1.4 Million of LIHEAP grant funding, and \$2.2 million for FFY 2015. This benefit will continue to be provided in the FFY 2016 LIHEAP Block Grant Allocation Plan.

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<sup>4</sup> The SUA is a fixed dollar amount set by each state that serves as a reasonable substitute for the actual heating and cooling costs of a low-income household. The SUA is a number that states use in place of gathering all of the applicant’s utility cost and usage information.

### **3. Utility Payment and Protection Programs. (Ratepayer Funded)**

All electric utility customers, including low-income customers, provide financial support to low-income and medical hardship households through charges on their monthly electric bills. Gas utility low-income and medical hardship program costs are recovered from gas ratepayers through their gas rates. The ratepayer-supported, utility-administered programs include: the matching payment/arrearage forgiveness programs mandated by *C.G.S. Sec. 16-262c*, winter shut-off protection, and serious illness/ life-threatening illness shut-off protection (see *C.G.S. Sec. 16-262c* and *16-262d*). For electricity customers, there are also other arrearage forgiveness programs initiated and administered by the electric utilities and paid for by electric ratepayers.

Applications: Depending on the program, applications for these programs are made through the CAAs, or through town social services, or directly through the utility companies. Individuals or households interested in these benefits can contact the CAAs or the utility companies directly for assistance. Applicants do not fill out written applications; instead, information is electronically captured and households may be required to produce supporting documentation.

**A. Life-threatening loss of utility service.** Gas and electric companies may not refuse to provide service at any time during the year where a lack of service is life-threatening. The utility companies have a form which must be completed by a physician for this protection. *C.G. S. Sec. 16-262c*.

**B. Winter shut-off protection:**

1) Electric utility service: Each fall, electric utility customers can apply with their electric utility for “hardship”<sup>5</sup> status. This protects them from use of an electric utility shut-off for collection purposes between

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<sup>5</sup> “Hardship” status is defined by *C.G.S. Sec. 16-262c* and *Regulations, Connecticut State Agencies Sec. 16-3-100(a)(1)(6)* (A) as a person receiving or seeking reinstatement of residential gas or electric utility service from November 1<sup>st</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup> who lacks the financial resources to pay his or her entire bill for gas and electric utility service, including but not limited to (i) aid to the blind; (ii) aid to families with dependent children; (iii) old age assistance; (iv) aid to the disabled; (v) Medicaid; (vi) supplemental security income; (vii) general assistance; (B) A person whose sole source of financial support is derived from social security, veterans’ administration or unemployment compensation benefits; (C) A person who is head of the household and unemployed, and whose household income is less than three hundred percent of the poverty level determined by the federal government; (D) A person or any resident of the person’s home who is seriously ill, as certified by a registered physician in accordance with subsection (e)(2) of this section, or has a life threatening situation; (E) A person whose income falls below one hundred twenty five percent of the poverty level as determined by the federal government in accordance with the income poverty guidelines from the regional office of family assistance, Department of Health and Human Services or its successor agency; or (F) A person whose circumstances threaten a deprivation of the necessities of life for himself or herself or dependent children of his or her household if payment of a delinquent utility is required.

November 1 and May 1, regardless of their debt to the utility or whether payments are made during this period. Households which are shut off must be reinstated during this period.

- 2) Gas utility heating service: Every fall, only gas customers who rely on gas for heat can apply for “hardship”<sup>6</sup> status. This protects them from use of a gas service shut-off for collection purposes between November 1 and May 1. If a gas customer had gas service provided the prior winter based on hardship status, he/she must have paid up to \$100 since the prior November 1<sup>st</sup>, or make a payment agreement to be reinstated. Non-heat gas customers do not have winter shut-off protection.

### C. Affordable Utility Payment Programs:

These programs are used to resolve utility payment issues and the risk of shut-offs.

- 1) Debt forgiveness programs for energy assistance recipients: Each winter, *Eversource Electric*, *Eversource Gas*, *United Illuminating (UI)*, *Connecticut Natural Gas*, and *The Southern Connecticut Gas Company* administer programs for their heating customers who receive energy assistance for that utility’s bills (meaning that utility is their heat source). The customers are asked to make monthly budget payments toward their utility bill. If the customer cannot afford the payment amount requested by the utility, the customer can ask to be referred to a social service agency for a review of the household’s income and expenses to determine if a lower payment will be allowed – the monthly payment can go as low as \$50 if that is all the household can afford. If all payments are received on time for a prescribed period, the utility matches all customer and energy assistance payments, including summer payments, down to a \$0 debt, and the customer is protected from a utility shut-off year round, regardless of the debt to the utility.

*Eversource Electric* and *UI* each has additional debt forgiveness programs for low-income customers including non-heat customers, where the customer payments are matched by the utility.

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<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

a) Eversource Electric Expenditures for 2014: Matching Payment Plan, Low-Income Uncollectibles, NEW Start and Low-Income Special Needs Program (includes non-labor administrative charges, *i.e.*, brochures, bill inserts, advertising) totaled \$57,689,000, recovered from ratepayers through their monthly bills (PURA Docket No. 15-03-1, Exhibit A, March 31, 2015).

b) United Illuminating for 2014: Low-Income Energy Assistance Expenses recovered from ratepayers through their monthly bills:

Uncollectible billings – low-income customers	\$5,480,334
Active Charge-offs	7,236,735
MAPP and MPP Heating Program	<u>6,886,547</u>
TOTAL	\$19,603,616*

\*Source: PURA Docket. No. 15-03-2, Exhibit 4-A, p. 2

(Items not covered in the above costs include: Carrying charges under- or over- collections; UI labor; customer services representatives; allocations to various departments, executives, etc.; taxes; special billing (IT, etc.); and alternative supplier-related receivables purchase costs.

c) Connecticut Natural Gas has a ratepayer-funded hardship forgiveness program.

*Connecticut Natural Gas* Expenditures Winter 2014 – Fall 2015: \$7,968,815 with \$19,117 administrative costs.

d) *Southern Connecticut Gas* has a ratepayer-funded hardship forgiveness program.

*SCG* Expenditures for Winter 2014 – Fall 2015: \$21,065,678 including administrative expenses.

e) *Eversource Gas* Expenditures not available, although the company has ratepayer-funded hardship programs.

#### 4. Operation Fuel

Operation Fuel is a private, nonprofit emergency fuel fund with its own private and ratepayer-derived EA funding. It has 100+ fuel banks operated through existing

social service agencies, including towns, throughout the state which accept and process Operation Fuel EA applications.

Because funding is limited, Operation Fuel EA is generally available only after households have exhausted their government EA benefits and have sought to obtain assistance from other local charities. Depending on funding, assistance is not available at all times.

Application Process: Applications are made at local fuel banks electronically. Supporting documentation may be required.

State FY 2015 Expenditures: As part of its funding, in fiscal year 2015 Operation Fuel received a \$2.1 million of ratepayer-derived funding. Of that amount, \$1.9 million was spent on direct benefits to eligible clients and \$0.2 million was spent on program overhead, including case management costs.

#### **5. Local Charities**

There is no specific accounting available to LIEAB as to how local charities process requests for EA and how much is spent. Upon information and belief, Catholic Charities, the Salvation Army, churches, towns, and other organizations provide EA benefits to some households but funds are extremely limited.

#### **6. Soldiers, Sailors and Marines Fund**

Created by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1919, (*C.G.S. sec. 27-126 & 27-138 et seq.*) this fund was established to assist veterans and their families, including providing energy assistance benefits. Funding for all benefit programs was capped in 1962 at \$15 million, and most of the assistance currently provided is derived from earnings on fund investments. Volunteers in towns across the state and the American Legion join to staff the program. Assistance is generally limited and is highly discretionary.

#### **7. Project Warm-Up**

Project Warm-Up is a collaborative program of United Way of Southeastern Connecticut and social service agencies in Southeastern Connecticut. Project Warm-up provides heating assistance for households who normally fall between various program guidelines but still have an apparent need. The program serves: households who have run out of all other fuel assistance, or have been denied fuel

assistance, and are low in heating fuel; households who have not applied for utility assistance and are in a short-term crisis; and households who may be over the state income guidelines and are experiencing an energy crisis. The fund covers home heating fuels (oil, natural gas, electric heat). The program usually begins November 1<sup>st</sup> and runs until April or until the fund is depleted. Area caseworkers do the intake for the program.

## **8. Others**

On occasion, other private organizations come into the state to offer residents energy assistance benefits, but such benefits have been unpredictable and limited. This has included the Citizen's Energy Oil Heat Program (one-time delivery of 100 gallons of home heating oil known as "Joe [Kennedy] for Oil").

## **EXISTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS**

### ***Energy Efficiency Programs (Weatherization and Conservation)***

- 1. Home Energy Solutions-Income Eligible (HES-IE) program.**
- 2. Federal DOE Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)**
- 3. Municipal utilities.**

### **1. HES-IE**

Home Energy Solutions – Income Eligible is a program initiative of the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund (CEEF) under a plan approved by DEEP and administered by the electric distribution companies and natural gas companies with funding from conservation charges on all electricity customer bills and via gas rates of natural gas customers. It provides weatherization measures to help renters and homeowners, regardless of heat source, to reduce their energy bills by making their apartments or homes more energy efficient. HES-IE is a free service for income-eligible households. Income eligibility is capped at 60% of State Median Income.

Weatherization services may include installation of energy efficient light bulbs, caulking drafts, cracks, and leaks in windows and doors, and installing water-saving faucet aerators and shower heads. Some households may also qualify for

insulation and energy-efficient appliances. When funding is available the services are coordinated with implementation of health and safety measures.

*Eversource Electric* and *United Illuminating (UI)* administer the HES-IE program, providing conservation assistance to low income households and the program is funded by all electric and gas customers. The CAAs also utilize funding from the utility administered program to supplement WAP benefits.

Application Process: Individuals can apply for HES-IE online at the Energize Connecticut webpage [EnergizeCT.com], by a phone call to the utilities' common call center [1-877-WISE USE] or through a CAA. Tenants and renters must have their landlord complete the *Owner's Permission Statement* which is included in the application. Services may be limited, even where landlord permission is provided, where providing such services could create a health hazard in buildings with the presence of asbestos, mold, knob and tube wiring, gas leaks, or carbon monoxide.

Expenditures: Total budget for Calendar Year 2015 was \$28,699,693. The program management costs are approximately 10% (approximately \$3 million).

## **2. Federal DOE Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)**

WAP is a federally funded weatherization program administered by the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) in partnership with certain CAAs. The CAAs qualify the households using the same application process used for energy assistance applications and coordinate the weatherization services by hiring and training local contractors. DEEP provides overall program management and technical assistance.

Examples of WAP services include heating system tune-ups and repairs, blower door guided air-sealing, attic and sidewall insulation, and health and safety inspections.

Application Process: WAP uses the same eligibility criteria as the CEAP program. Eligibility is capped at 60% of State Median Income or 200% of the Federal Poverty Level for large households. Consistent with federal regulations, priority is given to households that are particularly vulnerable, such as households that have the elderly, persons with disabilities, families with children and high energy users. For multi-family dwellings, at least two-thirds of the tenants must be income-eligible. The WAP program has a smaller scale of funding compared to the HES-IE program, which affects whether CAAs process households' applications through WAP and/or HES-IE.

Expenditures: For SFY 2016 (Federal PY 2015) the Federal budget is \$2,201,899. The administrative costs for the CAAs and DEEP total \$220,190 or 10%.

### 3. Municipal Utilities

Municipal utilities have energy efficiency programs for their customers, typically modeled on the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund programs. These municipalities include: Bozrah, Groton, Jewett City, Norwich, S. Norwalk, Norwalk Third Taxing District, and Wallingford.

## Summary of Statutory Charges to LIEAB and LIEAB RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) Statutory Charge: [Consider how] the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), community action agencies, as defined by section 17b-885, electric distribution companies, as defined by section 16-1, as amended by this act, and municipal electric utilities, as defined by section 7-233b, can securely share heating assistance program applicant data, with respect to customer energy usage levels, past participation and eligibility for energy assistance and energy efficiency programs, and other data deemed relevant to improve coordination among such program and program administrators

### Recommendations:

- **The CGA should consider various options to share, to the extent legally possible, information from electric distribution, gas, and municipal utilities, as well as deliverable fuel companies and make it available to DSS, DEEP and the CAAs for households receiving energy assistance. The information on past participation in energy assistance and energy efficiency programs, eligibility for those programs, and a significant amount of other relevant data exists within the CAAs and is shared with DEEP and DSS. Electric distribution, gas, and municipal utility information, as well as deliverable fuel heating provider information are currently not accessible and therefore it is difficult to track**



comprehensive data regarding customer energy usage levels. Any option should protect the privacy of individual customers, but could be made available to target conservation services to households with the highest consumption. Clear authorization for sharing this information could be included in the energy assistance application if needed. (While not a recommendation, please note that the “Energy Burden Data Collection” section below notes the plan for mandatory HHS data collection of energy burden information that DSS is implementing); and

- Continue improving the practice of communicating availability of energy assistance and energy efficiency programs.

(2) Statutory Charge: [Consider the] costs and benefits of current energy assistance and energy efficiency programs and how to maximize customer benefits through such customers’ participation in any combination of energy assistance and energy efficiency programs;

**Recommendations:**

- Improve the energy conservation application process to streamline access to both federally funded (DOE WAP) and ratepayer financed (HES-IE) energy efficiency programs.
- Establish an emergency furnace/boiler repair and replacement program within available funding utilizing high efficiency heating equipment and coordinate provision of this assistance with weatherization/conservation assistance to ensure heating systems are properly sized so they operate at high efficiency;
- Ensure that a designated State of Connecticut authority shall coordinate the HES-IE (ratepayer) and DOE WAP (federally funded) weatherization programs, regardless of whether an individual seeks assistance through a CAA or directly from a utility, to ensure quality services for applicants;
- Encourage enhanced coordination between the parties;

- **Notify households through their energy assistance award notification letters that they are also eligible for winter shut-off protection; and**
- **Streamline costs of administering the programs wherever practicable.**

(3) Statutory Charge: [Consider how] to streamline the application process for energy assistance and energy efficiency program applicants and the possible development of joint electronic applications;

**Recommendation:**

- **Encourage DEEP and DSS to explore ways to continue to streamline the eligibility determination and administration of the energy assistance and energy efficiency programs;**

(4) Statutory Charge: [Consider how] to make energy assistance and energy efficiency programs more accessible and feasible for tenants in rental housing units, including, but not limited to, how to best secure landlord permission for such services;

**Recommendations:**

- **Encourage cooperation through outreach and educational programs;**
- **Administratively review the language used in applications for energy efficiency services (WAP and HES-IE) to ensure consistency with state and federal laws regarding the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords; and,**
- **Improve compliance with, and enforcement of, building and housing codes in tenant properties.**

(5) Statutory Charge: [Consider coordination] efforts to best improve boiler and furnace replacement programs.

**Recommendations:**

- **Establish an emergency furnace/boiler repair and replacement program within available funding utilizing high efficiency heating equipment and**

**coordinate provision of this assistance with weatherization/conservation assistance to ensure heating systems are properly sized so they operate at high efficiency; and**

- **Coordinate any furnace or boiler replacement with conservation improvements so heating units can be properly sized for efficiency.**

## **PROCESS**

LIEAB reviewed the legislative requirement for this assignment in August 2015. On September 2, 2015 a LIEAB subcommittee was formed and began the process of breaking down the assignment and collecting information.

The LIEAB subcommittee met every two weeks thereafter to discuss the questions raised by the legislation, review available data, and draft recommendations. In late October 2015, the subcommittee began drafting this report which includes information about existing energy assistance and energy efficiency programs, costs of the programs, and the processes of accessing them by low-income individuals.

The subcommittee reached a consensus regarding many recommendations.

## **ENERGY BURDEN DATA COLLECTION**

HHS is requiring states (DSS) to incorporate performance measures to gauge the energy burden of each household receiving funding through LIHEAP. Energy burden is defined as the percentage of household income spent on home energy costs. These measures will eventually enable states to better identify those households with the highest energy burdens, with the intent to focus resources on those households most in need. Performance measures requirements also include tracking information regarding whether households are in danger of losing their heat, are out of fuel when they apply for EA, or have had their services disconnected. DSS is in the process of harvesting this data from FFY 2015, and will be piloting ways to secure energy consumption data electronically from utility and deliverable fuel vendors for participants enrolled in the CEAP. HHS will require states to start reporting this information in FFY 2017.

