

Resolution Regarding Federal Funding of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program

WHEREAS, The Executive Committee of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) convened at its Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C. on March 4, 1994 adopted a Resolution calling for all commissions to actively support funding of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) with no less than \$1.8 Billion (as proposed by the Administration) for the July 1, 1994-June 30, 1995 program year; *and*

WHEREAS, NARUC, convened at its Annual Convention in New York City, in November, 1993, adopted a Resolution recommending that the Administration propose and the Congress adopt a LIHEAP budget of at least \$1.8 billion for fiscal year 1995 and reject any proposal for yet more LIHEAP funding reductions; *and*

WHEREAS, The 103rd Congress approved a fiscal year 1995 appropriation of \$1.319 billion for LIHEAP and a forward funding of the same amount for fiscal year 1996; *and*

WHEREAS, LIHEAP has already absorbed a substantial cut in funding as part of deficit reduction efforts in that the \$2.1 billion fiscal year 1985 program has been cut by one-third; *and*

WHEREAS, The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations is considering H.R. 845, legislation which proposes to rescind the entire fiscal year 1996 appropriation of \$1.319 billion for LIHEAP; *and*

WHEREAS, Low income families, the elderly and many working poor Americans face a continuing energy crisis with energy burdens that exceed 15% of their household income; *and*

WHEREAS, The federal LIHEAP funds significantly ease the home energy affordability crisis faced by millions of Americans; *and*

WHEREAS, The LIHEAP program is an important part of a two-part energy assistance strategy designed by States to provide energy assistance payments to low income households while promoting energy efficiency in these households; *and*

WHEREAS, LIHEAP provides built-in flexibility in Federal-State partnerships as a means of reducing the size of federal government, and is the foundation for many programs authorized by State Public Utility Commissions and many gas and electric companies and community service organizations that assist low-income customers:

- * to meet their bill payment obligations through cash grants, arrearage forgiveness, and reduction of bills to more affordable levels;

- * to weatherize home and reduce usage;
- * to repair defective heating equipment;
- * to prevent service terminations in winter as well as during heat emergencies; and

WHEREAS, Many low income Americans do not have sufficient income to pay for the basic necessities of life and are experiencing a crisis in paying home energy bills, thereby contributing to a health and safety crisis which is a national, not a local crisis; *and*

WHEREAS, Further reductions in or the total elimination of funding for LIHEAP will threaten the continuation of a number of State initiatives that have relied on LIHEAP to be the foundation for providing a modest amount of energy security for low income Americans; *now, therefore, be it*

RESOLVED, That the Executive Committee of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners convened at its 1995 Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C., urges Congress to reject any cuts in or rescissions to LIHEAP funding, and to adopt a LIHEAP budget as requested by the Administration for fiscal years 1996 and 1997.

*Sponsored by the Committees on Energy Conservation and Finance and Technology
Adopted March 1, 1995*