

Resolution Regarding the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

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**WHEREAS**, The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) has consistently supported a Resolution calling for all commissions to continue to actively support the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) as well as adequate funding for it; and

**WHEREAS**, LIHEAP is a vital lifeline to low income families working poor households, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities in meeting their energy needs; 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 program funding significantly eases 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 through LIHEAP while promoting energy efficiency through the DOE weatherization program; and

**WHEREAS**, LIHEAP is a targeted block grant program, which provides built-in flexibility in Federal-State partnerships, and is the foundation for many programs authorized by State Public Utility Commissions and many gas and electric companies and community service organizations, which assist low-income

customers:

- To meet their bill payment obligations through direct assistance, arrearage forgiveness, a reduction of bills to more affordable levels;
- To prevent service terminations in winter as well as during heat emergencies;
- To help keep working poor households self-sustainable;
- To help households make the transition from public assistance;
- To weatherize homes, to repair defective heating equipment, and reduce usage;

**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 funding for LIHEAP will undermine and threaten the continuation of a number of State initiatives that have relied on the LIHEAP program to be the foundation for providing a modest amount of energy security for low-income Americans: *now therefore be it*

**RESOLVED**, That the Board of Directors of National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) convened in its March 2000 Winter Meeting in Washington, D.C., supports the appropriation of at least \$1.4 billion in regular funding for FY 2001 and an advance appropriation of at least \$1.5 billion for FY 2002; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, that NARUC supports the President's recent emergency supplemental request of an additional \$600 million in Emergency and Contingency funds for LIHEAP through the end of FY 2000, enabling this program to provide assistance for the remainder of the heating season as well as in the event of

severe summer heat waves; *and be it further*

**RESOLVED**, That NARUC recommends that Congress enact  
\$300 million in emergency contingency funding for FY 2001.

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Sponsored by the Committee on Consumer Affairs

Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors, March 8, 2000.