Gov. Frank Murkowski
Alaska
Gov. Janet Napolitano
Arizona
Gov. M. Jodi Rell
Connecticut
Gov. Ruth Ann Minner
Delaware
Gov. Rod Blagojevich
Illinois
Gov. Mitch Daniels
Indiana
Gov. Thomas Vilsack
Iowa
Gov. Kathleen Sebelius
Kansas
Gov. Kathleen Blanco
Louisiana
Gov. John Baldacci
Maine
Gov. Robert Ehrlich
Maryland
Gov. Mitt Romney
Massachusetts
Gov. Jennifer Granholm
Michigan
Gov. Tim Pawlenty
Minnesota
Gov. Brian Schweitzer
Montana
Gov. Dave Heineman
Nebraska
Gov. John Lynch
New Hampshire
Gov. Jon Corzine
New Jersey
Gov. Bill Richardson
New Mexico
Gov. George Pataki
New York
Gov. Mike Easley
North Carolina
Gov. John Hoeven
North Dakota
Gov. Bob Taft
Ohio
Gov. Brad Henry
Oklahoma
Gov. Ted Kulongoski
Oregon
Gov. Edward Rendell
Pennsylvania
Gov. Donald Carcieri
Rhode Island
Gov. Jon Huntsman, Jr.
Utah
Gov. James Douglas
Vermont
Gov. Tim Kaine
Virginia
Gov. Chris Gregoire
Washington
Gov. Joe Manchin III
West Virginia
Gov. Jim Doyle
Wisconsin
Gov. Dave Freudenthal
Wyoming

February 6, 2006

The Honorable Bill Frist
Majority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker
US House of Representatives

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
US House of Representatives

Dear Senator Frist, Senator Reid, Speaker Hastert, and Representative Pelosi,

For several months this winter, states have taken steps to help assure that our most vulnerable residents are not overwhelmed by the sharp rise in home heating costs. This has often meant significant state contributions to emergency relief funds or supplementing existing state-federal programs. Despite these actions by the states and the record cost of energy nationwide, federal funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) reflects a net *decrease* from the previous fiscal year's total. We urge Congress to join the states in meeting the well-documented need for additional home heating assistance by passing $2 billion in immediate additional LIHEAP assistance.

Governors supported the progress that was made when LIHEAP was authorized at $5.1 billion in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, but were disappointed when Congress appropriated only $2.16 billion for FY 2006. While we appreciate the President's recent release of an additional $100 million of emergency LIHEAP funds and Congress' proposal to add $1 billion for FY 2007, urgent action is needed to address the Energy Information Administration (EIA)'s prediction of a 30 to 70 percent rise in consumer energy costs this winter.

Covering dramatic increases in natural gas and heating oil prices presents a potential hardship for our citizens. LIHEAP applications are projected to increase by as much as 25% in some states. As noted above, many states,, energy industry leaders, and private citizens have done their part by increasing investments in the program. We are asking you to join us by sending legislation to the President that provides enough funding to meet our low-income citizens' energy needs for 2006. If Congress does not increase LIHEAP funding in the next few weeks, state programs across the country could run dry, and the number of households unable to meet their basic heating needs could skyrocket.

Our states are in the process of documenting the potential shortfalls in LIHEAP funding and the supplemental funding states have already provided. We look forward to sharing that information with you shortly. Thank you for your consideration of this request and your continued commitment to assisting our neediest families. We hope that you will take this opportunity to actively support the LIHEAP program.

Sincerely,

Governor Frank H. Murkowski
Alaska

Governor Janet Napolitano
Arizona

Governor M. Jodi Rell
Connecticut

Governor Ruth Ann Minner
Delaware

Governor Rod Blagojevich
Illinois

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