

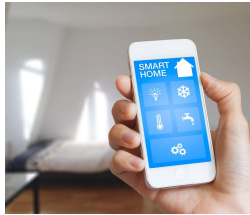
# LOW-INCOME ENERGY POLICY BOARD

*"Reducing the number of households with unsustainable energy burdens"*

Anne Armstrong,  
Brad Banks, and  
Andrew McNeally

Co-leaders

July 25, 2022



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## Welcome and Housekeeping



THIS MEETING IS  
BEING RECORDED



PLEASE MUTE  
YOURSELF WHEN NOT  
SPEAKING



BOARD MEMBERS,  
YOU MAY RAISE YOUR  
HAND TO SPEAK OR  
COMMENT IN THE  
CHAT




THERE WILL BE A  
PUBLIC Q&A AT THE  
END OF THE MEETING




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## Agenda





```

graph TD
    A[Housekeeping] --> B[Roll Call & New Members]
    B --> C[Approval of Minutes]
    B --> D[Recommendation Process Discussion]
    B --> E[Revisit Values]
    B --> F[Affordability & Customer Protections]
    D --> G[Discussion]
    E --> H[Next Steps & Announcements]
    F --> I[Public Q&A]
    
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## Roll Call of Members with Lived Experience & Stakeholder Members

- David Covey – Lived Experience
- Synia Gant-Jordan – Lived Experience
- Latasha Hannah – Lived Experience
- Rick Bunch - 5 Lakes Energy; Michigan Municipal Association for Utility Issues
- Alexis Blizman - Ecology Center
- Briana DuBose- EcoWorks Detroit
- Martin Kushler – ACEEE (American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy)
- Patrick Leahy - SEMCO Energy Gas Company
- Kasey McNeally - Superior Watershed
- Briana Parker – Elevate Energy
- Wende Randall - Kent County Essential Needs Task Force
- Derrell Slaughter – National Resource Defense Council; Governor’s Council on Climate Solutions

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## Roll Call of State Policy Experts

- ❑ Cory Connolly - Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
- ❑ Rachael A. Eubanks – Department of Treasury
- ❑ Jeff Guilfoyle - Department of Treasury
- ❑ Kelly Rose – Michigan State Housing Development Authority
- ❑ Ninah Sasy - Department of Health and Human Services - Social Determinants of Health Strategy




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## Roll Call of Staff Policy Experts

- ❑ Elaina Braunschweig - Analyst, Regulated Energy Division
- ❑ Jamie Curtis - Grant Administrator, Michigan Energy Assistance Program
- ❑ Christina Forist – Manager, Compliance & Investigation Section
- ❑ Reka Holley - Voelker – Manager, Communications Section
- ❑ Shatina Jones – MPSC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer
- ❑ Amy Rittenhouse - Communications Specialist
- ❑ Jake Thelen - Departmental Specialist, Compliance & Investigation Section
- ❑ Mary Wilkins - Departmental Specialist, Customer Assistance Division



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## Approval of Minutes

- ❑ Poll for approval of minutes
  - Board Member Name
    - ❑ Approve
    - ❑ Do not Approve
    - ❑ Abstain



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## Low-Income Energy Policy Board



### ❑ Purpose

→ To guide the process of assessing energy affordability and accessibility holistically, especially through linking energy waste reduction services and energy assistance programs.

### ❑ Overarching Goal

→ Reduce the number of households with unsustainable energy burdens



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## Recommendation Process

- How the Low-Income Energy Policy Board works with urgent items and interacts with legislative issues



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## Discussion





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# Policy Pillars

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CUSTOMER CENTERED  
ENGAGEMENT &  
COORDINATION



AFFORDABILITY &  
CUSTOMER PROTECTIONS


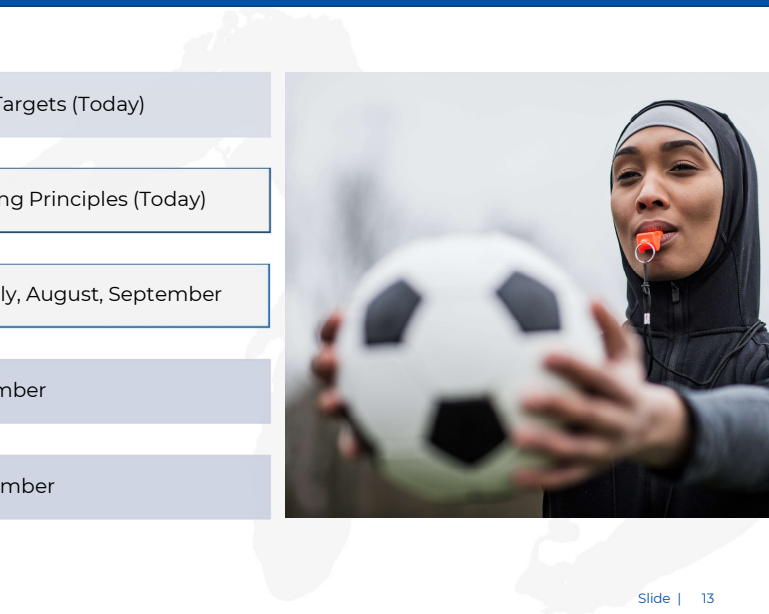


LOW-INCOME  
ENERGY WASTE  
REDUCTION




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# Planning Process Leading to Action



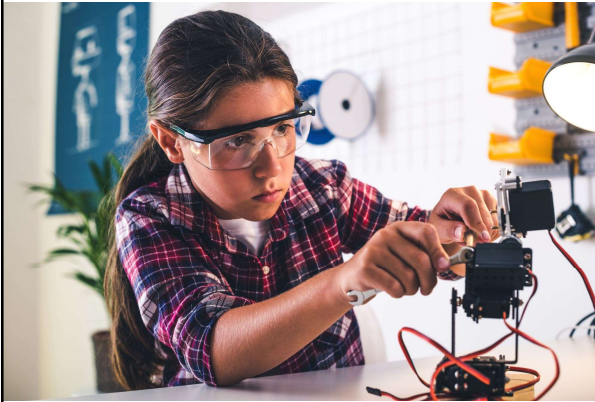
- 1. Organize** Organize Focus Areas / Targets (Today)
- 2. Assess** Assess Values and Guiding Principles (Today)
- 3. Determine** Determine Priorities - July, August, September
- 4. Articulate** Articulate Goals - September
- 5. Create** Create Strategies - November



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## Values Related to Finding Solutions



- ▣ Affordability (82%)
- ▣ Home Energy Security (29% ea.)
- ▣ Healthy Climate
- ▣ Housing
- ▣ Health



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## Values that Help to Achieve Purpose



- ▣ Measurable Impact (65%)
- ▣ Action (41%)
- ▣ Collaboration (24%)
- ▣ Diversity of representation, input, experience, and knowledge (24%)



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## Values of Foundational Behaviors



- ❑ Respect (59%)
- ❑ Inclusion (41%)
- ❑ Transparency (35%)
- ❑ Integrity (24%)



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## Board Values Discussion

### Most Often Chosen

#### Finding Solutions

- ❑ Affordability (82%)
- ❑ Inclusion (41%)

#### Achieving Purpose

- ❑ Measurable Impact (65%)
- ❑ Action (41%)

#### Foundational Behaviors

- ❑ Respect (59%)
- ❑ Transparency (35%)

### Next Tier Values

#### Finding Solutions

- ❑ Home Energy Security(29%)
- ❑ Healthy Climate (29%)
- ❑ Housing (29%)
- ❑ Health (29%)

#### Achieving Purpose

- ❑ Collaboration (24%)
- ❑ Diversity of representation, input, experience, and knowledge (24%)

#### Foundational Behaviors

- ❑ Integrity (24%)



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## Preparation for Goal Setting

- ❑ Continuing subcommittee work
  - Requesting and assessing data
  - Evaluating and investigating opportunities
- ❑ Laying foundations for goal setting



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# Affordability & Customer Protections

## Policy Foundation

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## Heating / Crisis Season

- ❑ **November 1 to March 31**-Winter Protection Plan protecting low-income customers and senior citizens from shut off
- ❑ **November 1 to April 15**-Utilities that do not collect the funding factor contributing to LIEAF shall not shut off service to any residential customer during these dates for nonpayment of a delinquent account
- ❑ **November 1 to May 31** -MEAP crisis season-Money from the LIEAF fund may be used for the program's crisis season and not more than 30% of the funds shall be spent outside of the crisis season



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## Protections and Assistance

### Protections in the Billing Rules

- ❑ Winter Protection Plans for Low-income and Senior Customers
- ❑ Medical Emergency Protection
- ❑ Critical Care Shutoff Protection
- ❑ Military Customer Protection
- ❑ Extreme Weather Condition Policies

### Assistance Programs

- ❑ Home Heating Credit
- ❑ State Emergency Relief
- ❑ MEAP
  - Assistance payment
  - Affordable Payment Plan
- ❑ Utility Based Low Income Credits
- ❑ Percentage of Income Plan Pilots



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## Assistance and Affordability

### Assistance Programs

- ❑ Home Heating Credit
- ❑ State Emergency Relief
- ❑ MEAP
  - Assistance payment
  - Affordable Payment Plan
- ❑ Utility Based Low Income Credits
- ❑ Percentage of Income Plan Pilots

### Affordability Strategies

- ❑ Energy Efficiency/Weatherization
- ❑ Rate Structures



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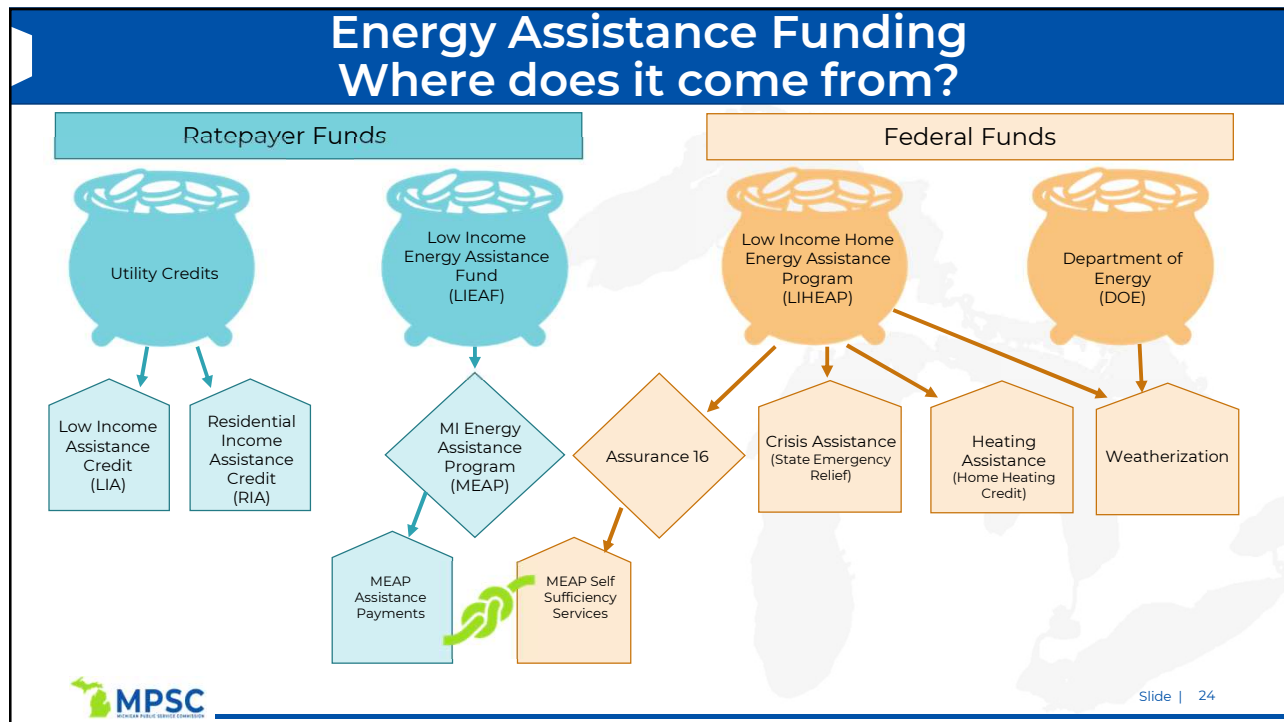
## Energy Affordability



### Proposed Definition:

- ❑ A household has the resources to meet their home energy needs for heating, cooling and other uses in a healthy, sustainable and energy efficient manner without compromising a household's ability to meet other basic needs.


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## Doors for Receiving Assistance

- ❑ Tax form: Home Heating Credit heating assistance
- ❑ Past due notice and DHHS State Emergency Relief (SER) crisis application
  - MEAP (goal of self-sufficiency)
  - Additional crisis assistance
  - Affordable Payment Plans
  - LIHEAP self-sufficiency services
- ❑ \*LIA/RIA utility credit enrollment
  - Automatic → HHC or SER
  - Self-declaration for LIA/RIA
- ❑ Agency Partners → Pilot Programs



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## Income Eligibility

| ≤110% FPL           | ≤150% FPL   | ≤200% FPL  |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Home Heating Credit | Winter Protection Program<br>(Payment Deferral)<br><br>RIA Credits (\$7-12/month)<br>LIA Credits (\$35-40 /month)<br><br>*State Emergency Relief<br>> Energy bill payment<br>> Crisis Weatherization<br>*MEAP<br>> Crisis Payment<br>> APPs<br>> Assurance 16 | Shut Off Protection<br>(Payment deferral)<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Weatherization Assistance Program |

\* Requires a crisis defined as a past-due notice

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## Annual Household Benefit

|                          |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| HHC Heating Assistance   |                |
| LIA & RIA Energy Credits | 2 to 4 X HHC   |
| SER & MEAP Crisis        | 17 to 25 X HHC |

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## Program Goals – Federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

- ❑ To assist households with low incomes, particularly those with the lowest incomes that pay a high proportion of household income for home energy, primarily in meeting their immediate home energy needs.



LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1981 (Title XXVI of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, Public Law 97-35, as amended through August 1, 1999)



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## LIHEAP Definitions

- ❑ **Highest home energy needs** means the home energy requirements of a household determined by taking into account *both the energy burden and the unique situation* of such household that results from having members of vulnerable populations, including:
  - Very young children, individuals with disabilities, frail older individuals
- ❑ **Energy crisis** means weather-related and supply shortage emergencies and other household energy-related emergencies.
- ❑ **Home energy** means a source of heating or cooling in residential dwellings.

LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1981 (Title XXVI of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, Public Law 97-35, as amended through August 1, 1999)



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## Program Goals – Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)

- ❑ Michigan Energy Assistance Program
  - The department shall distribute the funds to eligible low-income households for energy assistance.
  - Energy assistance must include services that will enable participants to become or move toward becoming self-sufficient, including
    - ❑ assisting participants in paying their energy bills on time
    - ❑ assisting participants in budgeting for and contributing to their ability to provide for energy expenses
    - ❑ assisting participants in utilizing energy services to optimize on energy efficiency
- ❑ MICHIGAN ENERGY ASSISTANCE ACT 615 of 2012, Eff. Mar. 28, 2013



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## Self-Sufficiency

From the Michigan Energy Assistance Program “MEAP” Workgroup

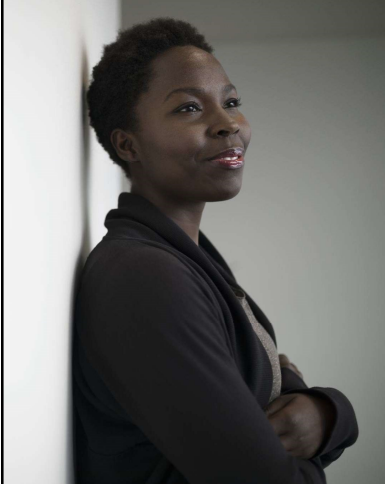
Self-sufficiency is  
A household’s basic needs are being met while minimizing reliance on public assistance.



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## Levers of Change Toward Self-sufficiency



### MEAP Workgroup Guidance

- Reduce expenses
- Reduce energy usage
- Increase income

### LIHEAP Assurance 16

- Needs assessment
- Referral
- Vendor advocacy
- Energy education
- Financial counseling
- Short or long-term case management



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## MEAP Population Analysis

- Customer on a Fixed Income:** A customer with an income set at a certain amount that cannot be increased. Customers who are not employed (and will not become employed).
- Customer with High Usage:** High Residential Energy User households are defined as meeting or exceeding the normalized heating fuel consumption projection by ten percent or more. Customers in this cohort may not be able to reduce usage substantially due to housing stock or mandatory energy consumption (e.g., medical equipment).
- Customers do not have either of the characteristics that would put them into the previous cohorts.**



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## Discussion



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## Next Steps

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### Board members:

- Board minutes poll result
- Save the date for a Board retreat
  - Sept. 26, 9-1 @ MPSC
- Save the date for the Summit
  - Nov. 3, 9-3:30 @ MPSC

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### Subcommittees:

- Submit recommendations
- August – September



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## Public Comment



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## Informal Dialogue



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