



Sen. Feinstein, Gov. Schwarzenegger Ask for Federal Assistance for  
Skyrocketing Energy Costs for Low Income Californians Due to  
Recent Heat Wave

August 2, 2006

Gov. Schwarzenegger and Sen. Feinstein sent the following letter today asking the President to allocate funds from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program emergency contingency fund to offset the soaring energy bills resulting from the recent heat wave:

August 2, 2006

The President  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are writing to ask your assistance in helping thousands of low-income Californians pay their rising utility bills this summer and in helping minimize the occurrence of heat-related illness and death. It is our understanding that \$100 million in federal funding remains available in the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) emergency contingency fund and we are urging you to release these funds to help the thousands of Californians who are struggling with record setting temperatures and energy usage, as well as soaring energy bills.

Over the last two weeks, a summer heat wave, with temperatures exceeding more than 100 degrees for more than 10 consecutive days in some parts of California, has resulted in more than 130 heat related deaths. Coupled with already higher electricity prices, low-income people, who already pay a disproportionate share of their incomes toward energy needs, will be hit by unusually high energy bills. Press reports indicate that many of these people, already burdened by high electricity bills, have placed their health in jeopardy by foregoing the use of air conditioning during the recent heat wave. California's current LIHEAP allotment will allow us to assist no more than 13 percent of eligible households. Unfortunately, we expect the demand for energy assistance to continue to spike as the summer progresses.

We think you will agree that even if temperatures and energy usage moderates in the near future, the damage has already been done for the vast majority of low-income households who will be faced with extraordinarily high energy bills when they finally come due.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger

Senator Dianne Feinstein

cc: The Honorable Mike Leavitt

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