

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2486

To amend the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 to increase the availability of heating and cooling assistance, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 31, 2025

Ms. ANSARI (for herself, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mr. BELL, Mr. CARSON, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. COHEN, Ms. CROCKETT, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Mr. FIELDS, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Mrs. McIVER, Ms. MENG, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Mr. MULLIN, Ms. NORTON, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Ms. OMAR, Ms. PETTERSEN, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Ms. TITUS, Ms. TLAIB, and Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To amend the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 to increase the availability of heating and cooling assistance, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Heating and Cooling
3 Relief Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds that:

6 (1) Energy remains unaffordable for low-income
7 households. Nationally, low-income households spend
8 a larger portion of their income on home energy
9 costs than other households. While the average en-
10 ergy burden for non-low-income households is ap-
11 proximately 3 percent, low-income households experi-
12 ence energy burdens that are 3 times higher, with 1
13 in 4 low-income households spending more than 15
14 percent of their income on energy bills. The report
15 for the Household Pulse Survey of the Bureau of the
16 Census, issued on October 3, 2024, noted that, for
17 families with incomes of less than \$35,000 a year,
18 about 54 percent said that they reduced or went
19 without basic household necessities, such as medicine
20 or food, in order to pay an energy bill, for at least
21 one month in the last year.

22 (2) The Low-Income Housing Energy Assist-
23 ance Program was authorized by Congress to reduce
24 home energy burdens with heating and cooling as-
25 sistance. In 2023, only 18 percent of income-eligible
26 households received a subsidy under the program.

1 (3) Climate change is fueling increasingly in-
2 tense winter storms, frequent hurricanes and
3 wildfires, and extreme temperatures. Over the past
4 2 decades, the United States has seen a 135 percent
5 increase in billion-dollar winter disasters, fueled by
6 climate change, rising from 31 of those disasters
7 from 1985 through 2004, to 73 of those disasters
8 from 2005 through 2024.

9 (4) Heat waves are increasingly common as cli-
10 mate change accelerates, and now occur more often
11 in major cities across the United States. According
12 to reports from the National Aeronautics and Space
13 Administration, 2024 was the hottest year on record
14 in Earth's history. The average heat wave season
15 across 50 cities is approximately 46 days longer now
16 than it was in the 1960s, and the American Medical
17 Association found that heat-related deaths have in-
18 creased by over 16 percent per year since 2016.
19 However, in fiscal year 2023, less than 3 percent of
20 income-eligible households received cooling assistance
21 under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance
22 Program, with only 7 percent of funding from the
23 Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program
24 going toward cooling needs. As a result, the Federal

1 Government should provide further cooling assist-
2 ance for communities in need.

3 (5) As a result of rising home energy bills and
4 insufficient Federal funding for the Low-Income
5 Home Energy Assistance Program, residential utility
6 arrears, or the amount of funds owed by households
7 to their utilities, has climbed to an all-time high of
8 over \$21,000,000,000 as of September 2024, with
9 over 21,000,000 households in debt to electric utili-
10 ties and over 15,000,000 households in debt to nat-
11 ural gas companies. Nearly 1 out of every 7 house-
12 holds is behind on their electric or gas bill.

13 (6) While most States have shutoff protections
14 that prevent utility companies from disconnecting a
15 customer's energy service during the coldest winter
16 months, 10 States have no winter shutoff protec-
17 tions, and 29 States have no summer shutoff protec-
18 tions. Even in certain States with winter or summer
19 shutoff protections, shutoffs continue to increase as
20 the period around the hottest and coldest months
21 lengthens.

22 (7) The loss of home energy service due to high
23 energy burdens is one of the primary reasons for
24 homelessness, especially for families with children.

1 In some housing contexts, loss of home energy serv-
2 ice is a grounds for eviction.

3 (8) The Federal Government should expand and
4 update the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance
5 Program, as part of a robust Federal social safety
6 net, to—

7 (A) protect families against unaffordable
8 home energy bills and home energy shutoffs, by
9 providing sufficient funding and imposing regu-
10 lations where necessary;

11 (B) ensure all low- and moderate-income
12 families have access to affordable home cooling
13 powered by renewable energy, which will enable
14 households to adapt to rising temperatures due
15 to climate change and promote climate and en-
16 ergy resiliency;

17 (C) enhance timely and meaningful public
18 participation and outreach—

19 (i) by including nontraditional part-
20 ners, including home energy suppliers,
21 local educational agencies, and entities car-
22 rying out other programs for low-income
23 people, to assist with signups; and

1 (ii) by adding stronger provisions for
 2 presumed eligibility and waiving docu-
 3 mentation requirements for eligibility; and
 4 (D) further Federal efforts to weatherize
 5 housing for low- and moderate-income house-
 6 holds, to help families struggling to pay their
 7 home energy bills and to meet national clean
 8 energy goals.

9 **SEC. 3. FUNDING.**

10 Section 2602 of the Low-Income Home Energy As-
 11 sistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621) is amended—

12 (1) in subsection (b)—

13 (A) by striking “section 2607A)” and in-
 14 serting “section 2604(e), 2605(u), 2607A,
 15 2607B, or 2607C)”;

16 (B) by striking “\$2,000,000,000” and all
 17 that follows and inserting “such sums as may
 18 be necessary, including such sums as may be
 19 necessary to enable the States to assist all
 20 households that meet the eligibility require-
 21 ments established under this title and to enable
 22 States to implement home energy affordability
 23 measures described in section 2605(b)(3).”;

24 (2) in subsection (e), in the first sentence—

25 (A) by striking “in each fiscal year”;

1 (B) by striking “\$600,000,000” and in-
 2 serting “\$2,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2026,
 3 and \$2,000,000,000 plus such additional sums
 4 as may be necessary for each fiscal year there-
 5 after,”; and

6 (C) by inserting “, or arising from a major
 7 disaster, as defined in section 2604(e)(1)” be-
 8 fore the period at the end; and

9 (3) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(f) There is authorized to be appropriated to carry
 11 out section 2607C, including making grants under that
 12 section, \$1,000,000,000 for fiscal year 2026, and
 13 \$1,000,000,000 plus such additional sums as may be nec-
 14 essary for each fiscal year thereafter.”.

15 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

16 Section 2603 of the Low-Income Home Energy As-
 17 sistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8622) is amended—

18 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (4) through
 19 (6), (7) through (10), and (11), as paragraphs (6)
 20 through (8), (10) through (13), and (15), respec-
 21 tively;

22 (2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-
 23 lowing:

1 “(4) The terms ‘extreme heat’ and ‘extreme
2 cold’, used with respect to a period, means a period
3 in which there is an increased risk of—

4 “(A) heat-related or cold-related, respec-
5 tively, illness, hospitalization, or death; or

6 “(B) failures or energy shutoffs of home
7 cooling or heating, respectively.

8 “(5) The term ‘HEAP coordinator’ means an
9 employee—

10 “(A) who administers a program funded
11 under section 2602(b); and

12 “(B) whose salary is paid, partly or wholly,
13 with funds made available under that section.”;

14 (3) by inserting after paragraph (8), as so re-
15 designated, the following:

16 “(9) The term ‘local coordinating agency’
17 means any local organization or local office that re-
18 ceives funds under section 2602(b) to perform cus-
19 tomer intake, or approval of benefits, on behalf of
20 the State agency.”; and

21 (4) by inserting after paragraph (13), as so re-
22 designated, the following:

23 “(14) The term ‘State agency’ means any State
24 agency that administers the program funded under
25 section 2602(b).”.

1 **SEC. 5. ASSISTANCE FOR EMERGENCIES AND MAJOR DIS-**
2 **ASTERS, INCLUDING EXTREME HEAT AND**
3 **COLD.**

4 Section 2604 of the Low-Income Home Energy As-
5 sistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8623) is amended—

6 (1) in subsection (a)(1)(B), by striking “section
7 2605(b)(9)(B)” and inserting “section
8 2605(b)(10)(B)”; and

9 (2) in subsection (e)—

10 (A) by striking “(e)” and inserting the fol-
11 lowing:

12 “(e)(1) In this subsection:

13 “(2);

14 (B) in paragraph (1), by adding at the end
15 the following:

16 “(A) The term ‘covered household’ means
17 an eligible household in an area where the
18 President, or the Secretary, as the case may be,
19 has declared or determined the occurrence of a
20 natural disaster, emergency, or major disaster.

21 “(B) The term ‘major disaster’ means—

22 “(i) a major disaster or emergency de-
23 clared under section 401 or 501, respec-
24 tively, of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
25 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42
26 U.S.C. 5170, 5191);

1 “(ii) a public health emergency deter-
2 mined under section 319 of the Public
3 Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d); or

4 “(iii) a period of extreme heat or ex-
5 treme cold, as determined by the Sec-
6 retary.”;

7 (C) in paragraph (2), as so designated, by
8 striking “natural disaster or other emergency
9 involved” and inserting “natural disaster, emer-
10 gency, or major disaster involved”; and

11 (D) by adding at the end the following:

12 “(3) Upon a declaration or a determination of
13 a natural disaster, emergency, or major disaster, for
14 an area, the Secretary and the Administrator of the
15 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall, to
16 the extent practicable, provide heating or cooling as-
17 sistance through such an allotment to a State for
18 covered households in that area.

19 “(4) To receive assistance under this sub-
20 section, the State that has jurisdiction over the cov-
21 ered households shall provide assurances to the Sec-
22 retary that the State—

23 “(A) will not preclude a household that re-
24 ceives heating assistance or cooling assistance
25 under this title during a calendar year, on the

1 basis of obtaining that assistance, from receiv-
2 ing cooling assistance or heating assistance, re-
3 spectively, under this title during that year;

4 “(B) will not require a household to indi-
5 cate that a household member has a medical
6 need for assistance under this title, to be eligi-
7 ble for that assistance; and

8 “(C) will allow use of such assistance for
9 purposes for which heating or cooling assistance
10 is available under the program funded under
11 section 2602(b), including for providing energy-
12 efficient air conditioners, and other equipment
13 needed for home cooling, to eligible house-
14 holds.”.

15 **SEC. 6. ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS.**

16 Section 2605 of the Low-Income Home Energy As-
17 sistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624) is amended—

18 (1) in subsection (b)—

19 (A) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking
20 “paragraph (5)” and inserting “paragraph
21 (6)”;

22 (B) in paragraph (2)—

23 (i) in the matter preceding subpara-
24 graph (A), by inserting “, subject to sub-
25 section (c)(1)(A),” after “only”;

1 (ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking
2 “(B)” and all that follows through clause
3 (ii) and inserting the following:

4 “(B) households with incomes which do not
5 exceed the greater of—

6 “(i) an amount equal to 250 percent
7 of the poverty level; or

8 “(ii) an amount equal to 80 percent of
9 the State median income,”; and

10 (iii) in the matter following subpara-
11 graph (B)—

12 (I) by striking “may give” and
13 inserting “shall give”; and

14 (II) by inserting before the semi-
15 colon the following: “, and the State
16 may not exclude a household from eli-
17 gibility on the basis of citizenship of 1
18 or more of the household members”;

19 (C) by redesignating paragraphs (3)
20 through (16) as paragraphs (4) through (17),
21 respectively;

22 (D) by inserting after paragraph (2) the
23 following:

24 “(3) ENERGY BURDEN LIMITS.—To the extent
25 practicable, the Secretary shall work with States

1 using funding under section 2602(b) (supplemented
2 by funding available through State-level energy pro-
3 grams, utility affordability initiatives, or other mech-
4 anisms as determined by the State in consultation
5 with the Secretary) to implement home energy af-
6 fordability measures—

7 “(A) to ensure that no household eligible
8 under paragraph (2) experiences an energy bur-
9 den for which the expenditures of the household
10 for home energy exceed 3 percent of household
11 income; and

12 “(B) to prioritize the further reduction of
13 energy burdens for such eligible households
14 with the lowest incomes.”; and

15 (E) in subparagraph (B) of paragraph
16 (10), as so redesignated, by striking “para-
17 graph (16)” and inserting “paragraph (17)”;
18 (2) in subsection (c)(1)—

19 (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking “as-
20 sistance to be provided under this title, includ-
21 ing criteria” and inserting “assistance to be
22 provided under this title, including—

23 “(i) certifying that the State and local
24 coordinating agencies in the State—

1 “(I) shall, to the greatest extent
2 possible, use data sharing agreements
3 with Federal and State low-income as-
4 sistance programs, including the sup-
5 plemental nutrition assistance pro-
6 gram established under the Food and
7 Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011
8 et seq.), the Medicaid program estab-
9 lished under title XIX of the Social
10 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.),
11 and the supplemental security income
12 program established under title XVI
13 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
14 1381 et seq.), to verify eligibility;

15 “(II) shall implement simplified
16 re-enrollment procedures for house-
17 holds with fixed incomes or house-
18 holds already determined to be eligible
19 under other Federal and State low-in-
20 come assistance programs, to reduce
21 administrative burdens on applicants
22 and agencies;

23 “(III) shall not require applicants
24 to submit proof of citizenship to es-

1 tablish status as an eligible household;
2 and

3 “(IV) if neither the verification
4 process described in subclause (I) nor
5 the re-enrollment process described in
6 subclause (II) apply to a household,
7 shall allow applicants to self-attest
8 that the applicants meet the criteria
9 established under this title for an eli-
10 gible household, to the extent nec-
11 essary to facilitate access to assist-
12 ance and prevent undue hardship for
13 applicants; and

14 “(ii) describing criteria.”;

15 (B) in subparagraph (E), by striking
16 “paragraph (5)” and inserting “paragraph
17 (6)”; and

18 (C) in subparagraph (F), by striking
19 “clauses (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (10), (12),
20 (13), and (15) of subsection (b)” and inserting
21 “paragraphs (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (11),
22 (13), (14), and (16) of subsection (b)”;

23 (3) in subsection (e), by striking “subsection
24 (b)(10)” and inserting “subsection (b)(11)”;

1 (4) in subsection (f), by adding at the end the
2 following:

3 “(3) For purposes of section 401(c), and the re-
4 mainder of title IV, of the Personal Responsibility
5 and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (8
6 U.S.C. 1611(a), 1601 et seq.), assistance under this
7 title shall not be considered to be a Federal public
8 benefit.”; and

9 (5) in subsection (j), by striking “the State may
10 apply” and inserting “the State may, subject to sub-
11 section (c)(1)(A)(i), apply”.

12 **SEC. 7. CONDITIONS FOR FUNDING.**

13 Section 2605 of the Low-Income Home Energy As-
14 sistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624) is amended—

15 (1) in subsection (b)—

16 (A) in paragraph (1)(C), by inserting be-
17 fore the semicolon the following: “, using toxics-
18 free materials that do not contain asthmagens
19 or respiratory sensitizers, giving priority in the
20 use of those funds under this subparagraph, to
21 the greatest extent practicable, to supporting
22 emergency home repairs that foster energy effi-
23 ciency, decarbonization, and climate resilience,
24 including through beneficial electrification of
25 heating and cooling”;

1 (B) in paragraph (8), as so redesignated—

2 (i) in subparagraph (C), by striking

3 “and” at the end; and

4 (ii) by adding at the end the fol-
5 lowing:

6 “(E) ensure that—

7 “(i) the home energy supplier will not
8 charge late fees for any payment, by a
9 household receiving assistance through the
10 program funded under section 2602(b),
11 during the period beginning 6 months be-
12 fore and ending 6 months after a date on
13 which the supplier receives funds through
14 the program for the household; and

15 “(ii) if the supplier receives funds
16 through the program for such a household
17 and charged such late fees during that pe-
18 riod, the supplier shall refund the fees to
19 the household not later than 7 days after
20 the date the supplier receives the funds;

21 “(F) ensure that the home energy supplier
22 will not shut off home energy from a household
23 that received assistance through the program
24 funded under section 2602(b), within the 2-year

1 period beginning on the date the household re-
2 ceived the assistance;

3 “(G) ensure that the home energy supplier,
4 in return for receiving funds through the pro-
5 gram funded under section 2602(b)—

6 “(i) will provide to the State data on
7 households that have not paid their home
8 energy bills, to enable the State and the
9 supplier to carry out coordinated outreach
10 concerning assistance available through the
11 program funded under section 2602(b);
12 and

13 “(ii) will, when sending a notice of
14 late payments to such households, include
15 information on such assistance, on how to
16 access such assistance through the pro-
17 gram, and on eligibility criteria for the
18 program; and

19 “(H) ensure that the home energy supplier
20 will, not later than 2 years after the date of en-
21 actment of the Heating and Cooling Relief Act,
22 in return for receiving assistance under the pro-
23 gram funded under section 2602(b) and
24 through a partnership with the State, offer a

1 low-income energy affordability payment pro-
2 gram;”; and

3 (C) in paragraph (10), as so redesign-
4 nated—

5 (i) in subparagraph (A)—

6 (I) by striking “10 percent” and
7 inserting “15 percent”; and

8 (II) by striking “and” at the end;
9 and

10 (ii) by adding at the end the fol-
11 lowing:

12 “(C) in planning and administering that
13 program, the State shall use the portion of the
14 amount described in subparagraph (A), that ex-
15 ceeds 10 percent of the funds described in sub-
16 paragraph (A), to expand the State program
17 funded under section 2602(b) so that the State
18 operates the program on a year-round basis;
19 and

20 “(D) in planning and administering that
21 program, the State—

22 “(i) shall make technological changes
23 to allow, not later than 5 years after the
24 date of enactment of the Heating and
25 Cooling Relief Act, for online submission of

1 applications for assistance through that
2 program; and

3 “(ii) shall, to the extent practicable—

4 “(I) conduct outreach activities,
5 including activities to increase enroll-
6 ment as described in subsection (p);

7 “(II) ensure that all HEAP coor-
8 dinators in the State receive wages,
9 for administration funded under sec-
10 tion 2602(b), at not less than the
11 greater of \$15 per hour or the appli-
12 cable Federal, State, or local min-
13 imum wage rate;

14 “(III) conduct training for
15 HEAP coordinators, State agency
16 staff, and community partners on best
17 practices for outreach, application
18 processing, and assisting eligible
19 households;

20 “(IV) as needed, conduct out-
21 reach relating to the program funded
22 under section 2602(b) to rural electric
23 cooperatives, home energy suppliers
24 owned by a political subdivision of a
25 State, such as a municipally owned

1 electric utility, and home energy sup-
2 pliers owned by any agency, authority,
3 corporation, or instrumentality of a
4 political subdivision of a State; and

5 “(V) ensure autoenrollment of el-
6 igible households into the program
7 funded under section 2602(b), and in
8 the process document any potential
9 barriers to autoenrollment that need
10 to be clarified or otherwise addressed
11 at the Federal level;”;

12 (2) in subsection (c)(1)—

13 (A) in subparagraph (G), by striking
14 “and” at the end;

15 (B) by redesignating subparagraph (H) as
16 subparagraph (I); and

17 (C) by inserting after subparagraph (G)
18 the following:

19 “(H) describes how the State will expand the
20 State program funded under section 2602(b) so that
21 the State operates the program on a year-round
22 basis in accordance with subsection (b)(10)(C) and
23 the measures the State has taken so far to carry out
24 that expansion; and”; and

25 (3) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(m) The Secretary shall allow, to the greatest extent
2 possible, eligible households to obtain assistance with
3 minimal administrative burden, by carrying out subsection
4 (c)(1)(A)(i).

5 “(n) The Secretary shall, by grant or contract, pro-
6 vide for a study that examines the rates of home energy
7 shutoffs and assessments of late fees among eligible house-
8 holds, relative to those rates for households that are not
9 eligible households, over a period of several years.

10 “(o) The Secretary shall provide technical assistance
11 to States to support partnerships described in subsection
12 (b)(8)(H).

13 “(p)(1) The Secretary, in consultation with the Sec-
14 retary of Education, shall issue guidance for use of funds
15 for administrative activities described in subsection
16 (b)(10) to increase, through partnerships with elementary
17 schools, secondary schools, and local educational agencies,
18 enrollment in the program funded under section 2602(b)
19 among eligible households that include children and that
20 have high energy burdens.

21 “(2) The Secretary shall issue guidance for use by
22 States on outreach relating to assistance through the pro-
23 gram funded under section 2602(b) to high-risk individ-
24 uals, with relevant medical conditions, that benefit from
25 the use of medical equipment that requires electricity, in-

1 cluding a ventilator, an oxygen concentrator, or another
2 medical device that requires electricity.

3 “(3) The Secretary shall issue guidance for use by
4 States on how to ensure that eligible households are aware
5 of additional grants, tax credits, and rebates, made avail-
6 able under Public Law 117–169, or an amendment made
7 by such law.

8 “(q) Not later than 1 year after the date of enact-
9 ment of the Heating and Cooling Relief Act, the Secretary
10 shall require each State receiving funds under this title,
11 including allotments under subsection (a) or (e) of section
12 2604, to develop and update as necessary, an action plan
13 for a period of extreme heat, which shall describe how the
14 State will use its allotments under this title to assist eligi-
15 ble households in covering cooling costs and mitigating
16 heat-related health risks.

17 “(r) Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
18 of the Heating and Cooling Relief Act, the Secretary shall
19 conduct a review of eligibility criteria for assistance under
20 this title and identify additional vulnerable populations to
21 include under such criteria, such as pregnant women and
22 individuals with medical conditions exacerbated by a pe-
23 riod of extreme heat.

1 “(s) The Secretary, in consultation with the Sec-
2 retary of Energy, shall require State energy offices receiv-
3 ing Federal funds under this title to develop plans—

4 “(1) to retrofit low-income housing stock to
5 adapt to rising temperatures and address environ-
6 mental hazards, including—

7 “(A) deploying highly efficient cooling sys-
8 tems, including heat pumps;

9 “(B) expanding weatherization and passive
10 cooling strategies;

11 “(C) addressing structural and health haz-
12 ards, including mold, lead, asbestos, and pest
13 infections; and

14 “(D) ensuring that necessary electrical
15 panel and wiring upgrades are completed to
16 support the installation of cooling systems and
17 energy efficiency improvements; and

18 “(2) to assess and adapt existing (as of the
19 date of development of the plan) shutoff policies to
20 protect all households while considering the impact
21 on energy affordability and energy grid reliability.

22 “(t)(1) Not later than 1 year after the date of enact-
23 ment of the Heating and Cooling Relief Act, the Secretary,
24 in consultation with the Secretary of Housing and Urban
25 Development, shall submit a report to Congress that—

1 “(A) identifies safe residential temperature
 2 standards for federally assisted dwelling units, con-
 3 sidering risks of periods of extreme heat and ex-
 4 treme cold and regional climate variations; and

5 “(B) proposes strategies to ensure compliance
 6 with the standards, including permitting covered
 7 utility allowances to be used for cooling assistance
 8 where feasible, taking into account regional climate
 9 variations and housing stock differences.

10 “(2) In this subsection, the term ‘covered utility al-
 11 lowance’ means a utility allowance—

12 “(A) applicable to public housing dwelling units
 13 under section 3 of the United States Housing Act of
 14 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a); or

15 “(B) under the housing choice voucher program
 16 under section 8(o)(2)(D) of the United States Hous-
 17 ing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(2)(D)).”.

18 **SEC. 8. WEATHERIZATION.**

19 Section 2605(k) of the Low-Income Home Energy
 20 Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624(k)) is amended—

21 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “15 percent”
 22 and inserting “25 percent”; and

23 (2) in paragraph (2)—

24 (A) in subparagraph (A), in the matter
 25 preceding clause (i)—

1 (i) by striking “subparagraph (B)”
2 and inserting “subparagraph (C)”; and

3 (ii) by striking “the greater of 25 per-
4 cent” and inserting “a portion equal to the
5 greater of 35 percent”;

6 (B) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as
7 subparagraph (C); and

8 (C) by inserting after subparagraph (A)
9 the following:

10 “(B) The State—

11 “(i) shall, to the extent practicable—

12 “(I) use the portion described in subpara-
13 graph (A) for energy-related home repair that
14 reduces dependence on fossil fuel energy
15 sources; and

16 “(II) use the portion to facilitate the use
17 of funds made available under section 2602(b)
18 to increase the participation of eligible house-
19 holds in community solar programs, or to other-
20 wise increase access to and ownership of dis-
21 tributed renewable energy infrastructure among
22 eligible households; and

23 “(ii) shall if possible give the highest priority to
24 using the portion for home repair that replaces ap-
25 pliances that rely on fossil fuels with appliances that

1 use electric heating or cooling technology, powered
2 by renewable energy.”.

3 **SEC. 9. HOME ENERGY PAYMENT ARREARS DATA COLLEC-**
4 **TION.**

5 Section 2605 of the Low-Income Home Energy As-
6 sistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624), as amended by
7 section 7, is further amended by adding at the end the
8 following:

9 “(u)(1)(A) The Secretary, in consultation with the
10 Secretary of Energy, shall develop a standardized template
11 for States and home energy suppliers to use to track and
12 report data on eligible households in arrears in home en-
13 ergy payments, including data on the related fees and dis-
14 connections for such households.

15 “(B) The template developed under subparagraph
16 (A) shall—

17 “(i) include a definition of an eligible household
18 in arrears, with respect to home energy payments, as
19 an eligible household that has not made payment on
20 a home energy bill for more than 60 to 90 days, as
21 determined by the State agency or local coordinating
22 agency, unless otherwise specified by State law;

23 “(ii) include metrics on related disconnections,
24 late fees, reconnections, and arrearage balances for
25 eligible households; and

1 “(iii) align with existing (as of the date of the
2 development) Federal and State reporting mecha-
3 nisms where applicable.

4 “(2) Not later than 1 year after the date of enact-
5 ment of the Heating and Cooling Relief Act, the Secretary
6 shall, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, issue
7 guidance on best practices for States (including through
8 partnerships with home energy suppliers) to pay for home
9 energy payment arrearages with assistance provided
10 through the program funded under section 2602(b), in-
11 cluding by paying for such arrearages at the time of dis-
12 semination of assistance through that program. Such
13 guidance shall prohibit any home energy supplier receiving
14 funds through the program from recovering arrearage as-
15 sistance costs through rate increases or other charges to
16 customers, including cost recovery mechanisms that dis-
17 proportionately impact low-income households.

18 “(3) To the extent practicable, the Secretary and the
19 Secretary of Energy shall jointly—

20 “(A) implement a data tracking system, aligned
21 with the standardized reporting template developed
22 under paragraph (1), to collect aggregate data re-
23 garding the number of eligible households in arrears
24 and their respective energy burdens and develop rec-

1 ommendations to HEAP coordinators on how to
2 minimize energy burdens for the households; and

3 “(B) issue guidance to home energy suppliers
4 with recommendations for working with State agen-
5 cies to address home energy payment arrearages of
6 eligible households.

7 “(4) The Secretary, in consultation with the Sec-
8 retary of Energy, may make grants to States to assist the
9 States in implementing data tracking and reporting re-
10 quirements under this subsection.

11 “(5) There are authorized to be appropriated to carry
12 out this subsection such sums as may be necessary.”.

13 **SEC. 10. PROGRAM NAME CHANGE.**

14 (a) LIHEAP.—The Low-Income Home Energy As-
15 sistance Act of 1981 is amended—

16 (1) in section 2607A(b) (42 U.S.C. 8626a(b)),
17 in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking
18 “low-income” the first place it appears; and

19 (2) in section 2607B(e)(2)(B)(ii) (42 U.S.C.
20 8626b(e)(2)(B)(ii)), by striking “Low-Income”.

21 (b) OTHER LAW.—A reference in any other Federal
22 law (other than that Act), Executive order, rule, regula-
23 tion, or delegation of authority, or any document, of or
24 relating to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Pro-

1 gram, shall be deemed to refer to the Home Energy As-
2 sistance Program.

3 **SEC. 11. JUST TRANSITION GRANTS.**

4 The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of
5 1981 is amended by inserting after section 2607B (42
6 U.S.C. 8626b) the following:

7 **“SEC. 2607C. HEAP JUST TRANSITION GRANTS.**

8 “(a) GRANT PROGRAM.—The Secretary and the Sec-
9 retary of Energy shall jointly carry out a grant program
10 under this section. In carrying out the program, the Secre-
11 taries shall make grants for a period of 3 years to States
12 and local governments to support the development and im-
13 plementation of interagency plans to reduce energy bur-
14 dens for eligible households with high home energy use.
15 The plans shall promote the reduction of those burdens
16 in a manner that supports a just transition away from
17 fossil fuel energy and protects eligible households from the
18 threats of climate change. The Secretaries shall make the
19 grants for a period of 3 years.

20 “(b) PREFERENCES.—In making the grants, the Sec-
21 retary shall give a preference to States, and local govern-
22 ments, who set up coordination systems—

23 “(1) to identify eligible households, that are re-
24 cipients of assistance through the program funded
25 under section 2602(b), with high home energy use;

1 “(2) to prioritize eligible households with the
 2 highest energy burdens and lowest incomes, in align-
 3 ment with the priority provisions in paragraphs (2)
 4 and (3) of section 2605(b), to receive emergency re-
 5 pair, weatherization, and retrofit assistance that re-
 6 sults in decarbonization and reductions in energy
 7 use; and

8 “(3) to partner with entities carrying out work-
 9 force development initiatives, unions, or minority or
 10 women-owned business enterprises to provide emer-
 11 gency repairs, weatherization, and retrofit assist-
 12 ance.

13 “(c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—At the conclusion of
 14 the 3-year grant period, the Secretaries shall—

15 “(1) conduct an evaluation of the program’s
 16 outcomes; and

17 “(2) prepare and submit to Congress a report
 18 containing the results of the evaluation and policy
 19 recommendations.”.

20 **SEC. 12. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**

21 The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of
 22 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.) is amended—

23 (1) in section 2607B(e)(2)(K) (42 U.S.C.
 24 8626b(e)(2)(K)) by striking “paragraphs (2), (3),
 25 (4), (5), (7), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), and (14) of

1 section 2605(b)” and inserting “paragraphs (2), (4),
2 (5), (6), (8), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), and (15)
3 of section 2605(b)”;

4 (2) in section 2610(b)(1) (42 U.S.C. 8629) by
5 striking “clauses (2), (5), (8), and (15) of section
6 2605(b)” and inserting “paragraphs (2), (6), (9),
7 and (16) of section 2605(b)”.

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