



M. Jodi Rell
GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

November 24, 2010

The Hon. Toni Harp, Co-Chair
Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2700
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

The Hon. John Geragosian, Co-Chair
Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2700
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Senator Harp and Representative Geragosian:

Thank you for your thoughtful response to my letter regarding the Low Income Home Heating Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Clearly, we all agree that the welfare of our citizens is paramount and families in need must be kept safe and warm in their homes this winter.

Winter is fast approaching and there is an urgency to ensure that demands for fuel assistance can be met despite a steep drop in federal funding and the legislature's unwillingness to prudently restore the program to previous, and yet still very substantial, benefit levels. We are now faced with finding approximately \$33 million in an already spartan budget to keep the program funded at its current, and very generous, benefit level.

The suggestions you offered, although well-intended, contain no serious spending cuts. Make no mistake, that is what we must do and what our taxpayers require of us in order to pay for fuel assistance at these higher, mandated levels. There are myriad options available for spending cuts and, as I have repeatedly offered, my staff stands ready to work with you to find meaningful, serious spending reductions.

To that end, I am immediately offering dozens of line items from the Executive and Legislative Branches that identify \$38 million in appropriation cuts. Many of these dollars have not yet been spent, some represent a partial reduction in funding for programs that can still operate well at lower levels, others eliminate carry-forwards from FY 2010 and some require statute changes.

There are many opportunities in this list of suggestions for us to work together thoughtfully, seriously and most urgently in order to help our families afford to stay warm this season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Jodi Rell".

M. Jodi Rell
Governor