

Rep. Lemmons III offered the following concurrent resolution:

House Concurrent Resolution No. 24.

A concurrent resolution urging the Congress and the President of the United States to increase the funding of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

Whereas, In light of the Hurricane Katrina disaster, many energy companies are raising their fees significantly, which will significantly impact low-income citizens of our country. The Michigan Public Service Commission expects natural gas prices to be higher than even preliminary estimates have suggested. Home heating bills are predicted to be nearly 50 percent higher than they were last year. This winter, when seasonal demand reaches its peak, costs are expected to strike a terrible blow to people who have had difficulties paying their home heating bills even before the recent increase in prices; and

Whereas, Low-income households in the United States may spend 15 to 20 percent of their earnings on home heating costs. High natural gas prices are squeezing the household budgets of families least able to adapt and most in need of reliable, affordable energy. This winter's situation is expected to bring a crisis to many people, including low-income seniors who will almost surely face difficult choices; and

Whereas, The federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is one of the most critical components of the social safety net. Community action agencies and advocates for the vulnerable in society have called for increases to LIHEAP for the past several years, as appropriations levels have not kept up with rising heating costs, rising poverty, and an ever-increasing aging population. LIHEAP, which has taken its fair share of budget cuts and only serves one of five people who need its assistance, should have its funding increased to provide a safety net to help impoverished elderly and poor families meet their heating needs; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), that we urge the Congress and the President of the United States to increase the funding of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.

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