

**U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
Subcommittee on Energy**

**Hearing on “Building the American Dream: Examining  
Affordability, Choice, and Security in Appliance and Buildings Policies.”  
Questions for the Record  
October 17, 2025**

**Responses From  
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**The Honorable Lizzie Fletcher (D-TX)**

**1. What kind of cost-savings can Americans expect to see from weatherization upgrades? Especially in states like Texas with increasingly hot Summers and more frequent extreme weather events.**

According to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the national average energy cost savings for weatherized households is **\$372 per year**.<sup>1</sup> Cost savings in warmer states with longer cooling seasons like Texas can often exceed these national figures. According to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA), Texas’ Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is available to eligible low-income households in all 254 counties of the state, and the program weatherized 719 units statewide in the past year. Per TDHCA, these projects achieved total energy savings of 21,067 MBtus at an average savings of 29 MBtus per unit. These estimated energy savings would yield roughly 34% to 39% energy savings per weatherized unit for the average single-family detached Texas home.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, measures installed via WAP programs in both Texas and across the country save households thousands of dollars over the lifetime of the upgrades. Eligible measures included in WAP projects - like insulation, air sealing, doors, windows, and HVAC repair and replacement - help keep families cool during hot summers. These energy efficiency upgrades also help reduce demands on the electric grid during extreme weather events.

WAP’s cost-saving benefits are not confined to energy and utility bill savings. Families receiving WAP services enjoy homes that are safer, healthier, and more livable, resulting in fewer missed

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Energy, Weatherization Assistance Program. [https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/wap-fact-sheet\\_0622.pdf](https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/wap-fact-sheet_0622.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Estimated savings based on Baseline Average Total Energy Consumption for Single-Family Detached homes in Texas, from National Renewable Energy Laboratory, “Baseline Annual Energy Consumption.” (<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/nrel.buildingstock/viz/StateLevelResidentialBuildingStockandEnergyEfficiencyElectrificationPackagesAnalysis/Introduction>) and U.S. Department of Energy, <https://www.energy.gov/scep/slsc/home-energy-rebates-program/articles/homes-measured-path-incentive-payment-calculator>.

days of work caused by sick days and doctor visits. According to DOE, WAP services result in decreased out-of-pocket medical expenses by an estimated average of \$514 per household per year.<sup>3</sup> Overall, for every \$1 Congress invests in Weatherization, \$4.50 are generated in returned energy benefits and non-energy benefits.<sup>4</sup> It is vital that Congress funds and reauthorizes operation of the Weatherization Assistance Program so that low-income Americans can continue to benefit from these important cost-saving benefits.

## **2. How will low-income Americans be impacted by cuts to efficiency standards and assistance programs like the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)?**

Building energy codes and appliance and equipment standards provide a minimum efficiency baseline to protect consumers. And while the demographics of homeowners vary greatly among states and cities, homes built to a strong energy code and common-sense appliance standards help ensure every day, hardworking Americans can pay their utility bills. In fact, according to the Department of Energy, in 2024, “a typical household saved about \$576 per year off their energy and water bill as a result of appliance and equipment standards”.<sup>5</sup> The rollback or elimination of these vital standards will disproportionately harm low-income Americans, who spend a larger share of their income on energy bills - typically spending 13.9% of total annual income versus 3.0% for other households.<sup>6</sup>

Importantly, appliance and equipment standards protect Americans and American businesses who rent where they live and work. According to 2023 census data, 35% of Americans live in rental properties.<sup>7</sup> In single-family homes, multi-family properties, and commercial buildings with individual meters, the tenant usually pays the electric and fuel bills, while the landlord pays for the upkeep of the property. Because the landlord does not receive the benefit of the energy savings from the utility bills when replacing a refrigerator or HVAC unit, or for placing more insulation in the attic or upgrading the windows to maintain home or office temperatures, they have no incentive to invest in more efficient equipment. Low-income Americans and small businesses are particularly impacted by rising energy prices with little opportunity to mitigate the impact through more efficient investments. Appliance and equipment standards protect those Americans.

LIHEAP is a critically important program providing utility bill relief to approximately 6.7 million low-income Americans struggling to pay their utility bills.<sup>8</sup> These funds keep the lights

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid; Oak Ridge National Laboratory, “Health and Household-Related Benefits Attributable to the Weatherization Assistance Program,” p.56. [https://weatherization.ornl.gov/wp-content/uploads/pdf/WAPRetroEvalFinalReports/ORNLTM-2014\\_345.pdf](https://weatherization.ornl.gov/wp-content/uploads/pdf/WAPRetroEvalFinalReports/ORNLTM-2014_345.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Energy, Fact Sheet on Appliance and Equipment Standards Program, March 2025, <https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/Appliance%20Standards%20Fact%20Sheet-02.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Energy, Weatherization Assistance Program. [https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/wap-fact-sheet\\_0622.pdf](https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/wap-fact-sheet_0622.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, “Demographic Characteristics for occupied Housing Units,” American Community Survey, 2023, <https://data.census.gov/table?q=total+number+of+renters&y=2023>

<sup>8</sup> LIHEAP.org, “The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program: 40 Years of Smart, Targeted Energy Aid.” [https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/625088a41425d19695c01ba8/683d7f574bd4e690bf3511cf\\_6a21d55a2054c3c464d0630e5aa3e0f8\\_LIHEAPWhitePaper\\_2025.pdf](https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/625088a41425d19695c01ba8/683d7f574bd4e690bf3511cf_6a21d55a2054c3c464d0630e5aa3e0f8_LIHEAPWhitePaper_2025.pdf).

on and maintain life-saving heating and cooling assistance during extreme weather. Across the country, utility bills have increased more than twice as fast as the overall cost of living.<sup>9</sup> This funding prevents utility shut offs and provides a reprieve for energy-insecure Americans.

In addition to direct utility bill support, a state may use up to 15% of LIHEAP funding to support their state's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP). This support allows states to address underlying energy waste by fixing home needs that plague low-income residents, including leaky home envelopes and inefficient equipment. By addressing the root causes of elevated energy usage, these upgrades cut utility bills for low-income Americans year after year. Nearly all states and territories (55 of 56) transfer state LIHEAP funding to state WAP programs, at a national average of 11 percent.<sup>10</sup> For many state WAP offices, these transferred dollars are their largest source of funding.

As a result, any cuts to LIHEAP would, in addition to harming bill assistance programs, also negatively impact states' ability to offer comprehensive energy efficiency retrofits and health and safety improvements via state WAP programs. The Building Performance Association is grateful for the overwhelming bipartisan support LIHEAP has received in both the House and Senate proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Labor, Health and Human Services packages and, as energy costs rise, we urge Congress to increase funding for LIHEAP.

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<sup>9</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, [Consumer Price Index Summary - 2025 M08 Results](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.nr0.htm).  
<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.nr0.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> National Association For State Community Services Programs, "Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Weatherization Info & Resources." <https://nascsp.org/liheap-weatherization-info-resources/>.