



# CAFCA

Connecticut Association  
for Community Action

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Public Hearing Testimony before the  
Connecticut General Assembly's Energy & Technology Committee

**In opposition to House Bill 6926:  
An Act Concerning Funding For The  
Residential Energy Preparation Services Program**

Rhonda Evans, Executive Director  
Connecticut Association for Community Action, Inc. (CAFCA)

February 18, 2025

Distinguished Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, Ranking Members, and Members  
of the Energy & Technology Committee:

Thank you for holding this public hearing today. The Connecticut Association for  
Community Action (CAFCA) is the state association that works with  
Connecticut's Community Action Agencies (CAAs), the state and federal  
designated anti-poverty agencies serving over 200,000 low-income people in all  
169 cities and towns. More information about Community Action Agencies is  
included at the end of this testimony.

**CAFCA opposes this bill, which eliminates \$8 million dollars from the Low  
Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to fund the Residential  
Energy Preparation Services (REPS) program.**

We know first-hand the importance of providing energy support to low-income  
families. Community Action Agencies partner with the Department of Social  
Services (DSS) to raise awareness of and enroll people in the Connecticut Energy  
Assistance Program (CEAP, Connecticut's version of LIHEAP). Last year, CEAP  
helped over 100,000 families statewide with home heating costs to avoid  
unnecessary energy crises.

While we support the REPS program and recognize that removing barriers  
(asbestos, mold, etc.) to enable weatherization work helps families reduce their  
overall energy costs and stay healthy and safe, funding for the program should not  
come at the expense of the LIHEAP program and its customers.

LIHEAP customer energy assistance benefit levels have returned to pre-pandemic  
levels while Connecticut's high energy costs have only gone up, not down. And  
households with incomes below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level struggling to

make ends meet spend 26% of their annual income on home energy bills<sup>1</sup>, meaning they're constantly pushed into crisis mode and forced to choose between heating their home and other essential needs like groceries, housing, medical care, and child care. Continued reductions in benefit levels will not meet the energy needs of our most at-risk families, putting them in even greater danger of having to make these choices again and again.

Both LIHEAP and weatherization play a role in keeping families safe and warm, fostering overall health and wellness, and lowering energy bills. But one program should not be sacrificed for the sake of another, and to the detriment of our most vulnerable populations.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to get in touch with any questions at [rhonda@cafca.org](mailto:rhonda@cafca.org) or 860-305-2937.

### *More about Community Action Agencies*

As the largest statewide safety net service provider, Connecticut's network of Community Action Agencies connects neighbors in need with resources that stabilize and improve lives and communities. These services and resources include, but are not limited to:

- Nutrition (inc. SNAP outreach, Meals on Wheels, and Congregate meals)
- Housing and shelter
- Asset development and financial literacy
- Energy and heating assistance
- Job training
- Early childhood care and education

Through a holistic, comprehensive, multigenerational approach, CAAs work with those in need to plan, achieve, and maintain a realistic path to short and long-term economic self-sufficiency and success.

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<sup>1</sup> Sears, Justine and Badger, Leslie. *Mapping Household Cost Burdens*. Operation Fuel (May 2023). <https://operationfuel.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/VEIC-affordability-study-May-2023.pdf>