

Addressing Health and Affordability Challenges for Low-Income Families

How energy efficiency can lower statewide health expenses, close the affordability gap and put people to work

HEALTHIER HOUSING = HEALTHIER PEOPLE AND STRONGER MORE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Addressing indoor health barriers improves occupant health, lowers energy expenses, and supports our state mandated carbon and energy demand reduction goals, while creating real jobs in our communities.



Problem: Up to 30% of homes in Connecticut (CT) have one or more safety concerns

Up to 30% of LMI homes have one or more health concerns such as asbestos, mold, mildew, knob-and-tube electrical wiring, and pests, which are barriers to full weatherization and lowered energy bills. Energy Assessments provided by EnergizeCT and WAP locate and identify hazardous conditions in LMI housing¹.

Solving for weatherization barrier funding in CT is a critical issue. These barriers limit ratepayers' access to energy-saving services that their utility bill payments help fund.

The increased thermal comfort associated with a weatherized building envelope, allows residents to shelter in place in extreme hot and cold temperatures even during power outages.

¹ Based on Energize CT data on homes barriered from Wx in CT (2017- 2019)

² Save Energy, Saving Lives by ACEEE & PSR, <https://www.aceee.org/research-report/h1801>

READ MORE: Yale Center on Climate Change and Health (https://publichealth.yale.edu/climate/YCCCCH_CCHC2020Report_395366_5_v1.pdf)

Reducing Energy Use Leads to Better Health

Energy efficiency and weatherization lead to better health outcomes for residents. A 2014 study found a 12% decrease in emergency department asthma-related visits and a 48% decline in poor health among adults who received home weatherization services².

What is LIHEAP?

LIHEAP is a flexible federal funding source with the potential to close the affordability gap and help CT reach our GC3 goals. Weatherization and energy-related home repair directly contribute to reducing energy burdens and improving home health and safety, both of which are LIHEAP goals.

Energy efficiency provides a pathway to positive health outcomes

Simple Solution to Indoor Health Barriers

Breaking siloed approaches and removing health barriers ensures households are served comprehensively, resulting in lowered energy expenses, lower energy demands on our grid, lowered pollution, and lowered carbon emissions. This will ultimately expand the number of LMI served in our state. Additional benefits include creating local jobs and addressing long standing affordable safe housing issues, and permanently lowering energy expenses.

An allocation of LIHEAP funds towards weatherization and barrier remediation would open the door for a comprehensive weatherization barriers remediation program, providing a solution to the 23-30%³ of income-eligible households in CT with home weatherization barriers preventing access to energy-saving services. This would also prepare CT for upcoming federal stimulus packages.

Connecticut boasts strong energy efficiency programs (EnergizeCT). These programs include comprehensive energy efficiency upgrades which support low-income resident's ability to effectively manage home energy demands and lower energy burdens. DEEP coordinates the state's existing energy efficiency programs (HESIE and WAP.) DEEP could establish an official Weatherization Barrier Committee inclusive of community action agencies, the utilities, contractors, advocates, and DSS to ensure proper coordination among entities.

³ Based on Energize CT data on homes barriered from Wx in CT (2017- 2019)

Crosscutting Benefits

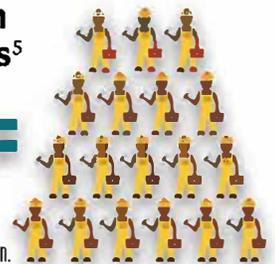
Job Creation - The use of LIHEAP funds to remediate barriers increases workforce opportunities. Expanding the capacity of the CT's network of weatherization contractors will help CT reach our carbon and energy goals.



Job Creation

Investments in the energy efficient workforce bring the highest return on investment of any green job - \$1M = 18 job years⁵

\$1 MILLION Investment =



⁵ 2020, Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction, Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction.

Energy Efficiency Saves Lives

A study by the ACEEE and Physicians for Social Responsibility found that **reducing energy consumption in the United States by 15% could have enormous annual impacts on public health, while lowering energy burdens⁴.**



⁴ Save Energy, Saving Lives by ACEEE & PSR, <https://www.aceee.org/research-report/h1801>

30,000

Fewer
Asthma
Attacks

\$20 BILLION

Avoided
Health
Harms

6 LIVES

Saved
Every
Day

Goals for LIHEAP

To address the remediation of home weatherization barriers for low-income customers, we recommend a higher level of LIHEAP weatherization funds be allocated to reduce energy burdens and improve home health and safety in CT.

We are recommending that up to 8 million dollars of LIHEAP be allocated to weatherization and removing health and safety conditions.