

Vermont's congressional delegation – Sens. Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders and Rep. Peter Welch – today announced that Vermont will receive \$19.5 million in Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding for FY2012.

The funding level is less than the \$26 million Vermont received in FY2011 but more than the \$11 million proposed by President Obama.

In a joint statement, Leahy, Sanders and Welch said, "This is disappointing news. Although the funding level is significantly higher than that recommended by the President, this will cause hardship for many Vermonters. The relentless budget battles in Washington are taking their toll on those who can least afford it. We are hopeful this additional \$8.5 million will help Vermonters in need, and we will continue to fight for increased funding for this vital program. We will be doing everything we can to increase this funding level when the Congress reconvenes in January so that nobody in Vermont goes cold this winter."

Sanders, Leahy and Welch are co-sponsoring the LIHEAP Protection Act to provide level funding for LIHEAP at \$4.7 billion.

LIHEAP funding is included in a FY2012 omnibus appropriations bill, which passed the House this afternoon and is scheduled to be voted on in the Senate this weekend.