



EEI Low Income Best Practices Workshop Advocacy 101 LIHEAP Advocacy Action Plan

Purpose: This LIHEAP Advocacy Action Plan is provided as a guide to assist users in developing a plan for their own organization. It is provided in both PDF and Word format, to enable editing as needed.

This plan assumes executive approval and coordination between various support organizations has been secured.

Develop a coordinated communications effort

(Seek support from corporate communications or marketing department)

- **Develop the LIHEAP “story” for your company, region or state** (TXU model provided)
 - Tell the good news of the 2006 LIHEAP advocacy outcome
 - share LIHEAP “good news” stories, highlighting examples of customers who benefited from LIHEAP help (maintain customer confidentiality unless customer agrees to be named)
 - Detail the LIHEAP specifics for your area
 - Dollars coming into your area, dollars still needed if all eligible customers were assisted – clearly demonstrate the “gap”
- **Develop a LIHEAP Action Day external communications plan**
 - Use the LIHEAP “story” as the basis for communications
 - Identify opportunities to share the story internally and externally
 - Develop press releases for locally, state and regional media outlets and newspapers
 - Develop a customer bill insert timed for a January or February 2007 release
 - Leverage other company external and internal communication outlets (i.e., external website, company intranet, business publications, community outreach programs, etc.)
- **Seek support from “new” LIHEAP allies**
 - Seek endorsements and / or resolutions from organizations and agencies that serve those in need or crisis, or advocate for LIHEAP target recipients (i.e., AARP, Area Agencies on Aging, Salvation Army, etc.)
- **Develop an editorial plan for scheduled LIHEAP updates**
 - Keep the LIHEAP issue front and center over the course of several months, or at least until 2007 funding is finally allocated.
 - Mail to other advocates, partners and potential partners
- **Leverage partnership communications plan**
 - Share the LIHEAP “story” and encourage partner organizations to publish through their communication channels (i.e., AARP monthly e-letter, FCOA Network Alert, Seniors Today newspaper, Salvation Army updates, etc.)



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Leverage the EEI Support LIHEAP website

(Seek support from corporate communications or marketing department)

- **Incorporate EEI Support LIHEAP into all communications and outreach**
 - Share with employees, retirees, vendors and others through broadcast emails
 - Briefly share the LIHEAP “story” then issue a “call to action” to visit the website and contact the congressional representatives (draft template provided)
 - Emphasize ease of use of the website – “60 seconds or less to contact Congress”
- **Market the EEI LIHEAP website**
 - Offer the Support LIHEAP link through as many communication channels as possible
 - Internal and external communications, partner websites or others
 - Send broadcast email notices to partner agencies (especially non-governmental, faith-based, elder and low-income advocates and others who serve LIHEAP clients)
 - Encourage partner organizations to share the website link with clients and partners through their own communication channels

Develop strategy for LIHEAP Action Day

(Seek support from local/state/regional governmental account managers and DC office/lobbyist)

- **Ensure that DC office and Customer Service are both telling the “same” LIHEAP story**
- **Confirm where LIHEAP presently ranks on the priority list for DC office**
 - DC office has many corporate priorities; it is important that the priorities in DC are not “disrupted” by LIHEAP advocacy effort
- **Leverage DC office contacts to secure appointments for LIHEAP Action Day on Feb 1**
 - Confirm that GA supports this activity and is in favor of our visits to Congress (this is normally their playground)
 - Seek help to get to the right people - Congressional reps and legislative aides that focus on LIHEAP – especially those who currently are not allies with LIHEAP
 - Seek DC office participation on the actual visits on LIHEAP Action Day
 - How much time can DC office dedicate to LIHEAP?
- **Identify and reach out to external affairs/governmental affairs/Washington DC contacts**
(Seek help from the and DC lobbyist)
 - Tell the LIHEAP story through existing governmental communication channels
 - Leverage communications developed above
 - Seek city/county/state support endorsements (resolutions) of LIHEAP
 - Seek involvement from mayors, boards of commissioners, etc.)
 - Seek participation in attending LIHEAP Action Day in DC
- **Plan and execute LIHEAP Action Day visit** (template to be provided)
 - Share the LIHEAP story for your area/state/region
 - To demonstrate unity and partnership, seek/sponsor partner organization member(s) to attend (i.e., Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, local CAA office, etc.)



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Reach out ASAP to "new" congressional members

(Seek support of local and state governmental account managers and DC office/lobbyist)

- Identify and reach out to new congressional members to share the LIHEAP story and seek their support
 - Conduct special campaign to contact new congressional members as soon as possible (before the holidays)

Other opportunities

(Not directly tied to LIHEAP, but supportive of providing assistance to families in need)

- Seek an employee payroll deduction option for utility fuel fund (HR and systems help required)
- Conduct utility fuel fund "fund-raisers" and campaigns
 - Seek employee donations through a "jeans day" or other such activities (HR approval may be required)