

Info Alert

National Conference of State Legislatures Office of State-Federal Relations

November 15, 2012

On Nov. 8, 2012, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [announced](#) that it will release \$3.068 billion in initial Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) block grant funds under the fiscal year (FY) 2013 continuing resolution (CR), which funds the government through March 27, 2013. Under the CR, LIHEAP block grants will be funded at an annualized level of \$3.493 billion, which is a continuation of FY 2012 levels with a 0.612 percent increase. A listing of each state's award can be found at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/2013-initial-cr-release-of-liheap-block-grant-funds-continuing>

The HHS announcement makes available a larger proportion of initial allocations to states than is typically observed. The initial awards represent either 90 percent of a state's annualized allocation under the CR or the amount requested by the state in the first two quarters of FY 2013, whichever is less. HHS noted in its announcement, "this gives states more certainty to plan for their upcoming heating season while allowing Congress flexibility in setting its final funding level for the program, as required by the CR."

It is uncertain whether Congress will finalize FY 2013 appropriations in the recently convened lame duck session, or wait until the 113th Congress convenes in January. Additional LIHEAP funding uncertainty remains in regards to the Budget Control Act's looming Jan. 1, 2013 sequestration deadline, which, if implemented, is estimated to decrease LIHEAP block grants from \$3.474 billion in FY 2012 to \$3.206 billion in FY 2013.

The President's budget proposed to reduce FY 2013 LIHEAP block grants to \$2.820 billion and allocated an additional \$200 million for emergency contingency funds—a measure that did not receive an appropriation in FY 2012. The Senate Appropriations Committee's version would level fund LIHEAP, but would divert \$100 million from the block grant to finance the emergency contingency fund. The House's version would level fund block grants at \$3.472 billion, although the bill would not appropriate emergency contingency funds.

Please feel free to email or call NCSL anytime ([Ben Husch](#) 202-624-7779 or [Emily Wengrovius](#) 202-624-8171), should you have any questions or concerns regarding LIHEAP.