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House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, CHAIRMAN

To: Rep. Harold James  
From: Italo S. Cappabianca, Intergovernmental Affairs Committee  
Date: December 5, 1995

Today's Harrisburg Patriot editorial page points out that this winter in Pennsylvania people are going to die because of federal cutback in the LIHEAP winter heating assistance program and nobody at our Capitol is trying to do anything about it. As the Patriot stated, "the silence coming out of the state Capitol is unconscionable."

As you well know, this is not true. Our caucus, including my committee and my Committee and the House Democratic Task Force on Budget Cuts have talked about these programs. It is the Republican's inaction on this matter that is unconscionable.

Tomorrow I am planning to hold a press conference at 11:00 A.M. in the Media Center to propose an immediate \$40 million dollar supplemental appropriation for LIHEAP. While the state has just announced that LIHEAP applications are now available, only \$17 million dollars has been allocated or received from the federal government. In the past two years LIHEAP funds have ranged from \$60 to \$100 million dollars. **Without our immediate action next week, it is my opinion that the \$17 million of available funds will be used before the General Assembly meets in formal session on January 17th. In other words our inaction next week will lead to an end of heating assistance around Christmas and the holidays and may lead to needless suffering by hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvania families.** We must act now!

Therefore I ask your cooperation to request that the Pennsylvania House of Representatives vote next week on a emergency \$40 million dollar supplemental appropriation for LIHEAP. At the press conference tomorrow I will be announcing this legislation and releasing letters to the Republican leadership in the legislature asking for an immediate vote on this urgent funding measure.

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House of Representatives  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
HARRISBURG

December 18, 1995

Honorable Thomas Ridge, Governor  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
225 Main Capitol Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Ridge:

I was pleased to hear that President Clinton last night released \$578 million in LIHEAP funds, and that Pennsylvania should receive somewhere between \$30 million and \$40 million. As I have said repeatedly, the poor in our Commonwealth desperately need these funds, and they could not have come at a better time.

Consequently, I ask that you take action to expand the eligibility requirements for those applying for these funds. While I understand the need for the emergency restrictions previously imposed, I ask that those standards be expanded in anticipation of these additional funds. Whereas, eligibility was placed at 110 % of the poverty level, I ask that we return to the previous level of 135%. This will allow many more needy families to heat their homes this winter.

The people of Pennsylvania desperately need these funds, and desperately need your support and assistance. Thank you for your kind attention and consideration to this very important matter. It will certainly be appreciated by many.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Italo'.

Italo S. Cappabianca  
Representative, 2nd District

ISC/cmr

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**Office of Democratic Legislative Information**  
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Harrisburg, PA 17120-0028

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Dan Ocko (717) 787-4358**

**Cappabianca Praises Clinton for Releasing Heating Funds;  
Urges Ridge to Expand Program**

HARRISBURG, Dec. 18 -- State Rep. Italo S. Cappabianca, who led Democrats' efforts in Harrisburg last week to begin state funding for winter heating assistance, today praised President Clinton for releasing \$578 million to the states on Sunday for low-income heating programs.

The effort to use state funds for heat assistance was blocked last week when Cappabianca's amendment to appropriate the aid was defeated in the House.

Cappabianca praised Clinton's leadership and courage for ordering that federal funds be made available to the states on an advanced schedule because of the earlier than anticipated onset of winter.

"Up to 200,000 Pennsylvania families will have a warm Christmas and holidays thanks to President Clinton," Cappabianca observed.

The Erie lawmaker called on Governor Ridge to immediately restart portions of the winter heating assistance program that were shut down because of the shortfall of federal funds. Before the government shutdown, Pennsylvania had about \$18 million of heating aid from this year's federal budget and from savings from last year's program. From this new allocation, Cappabianca expects that Pennsylvania will receive another \$30 to \$40 million.

Even with this new assistance, Cappabianca believes that Pennsylvania will fall at least one-third below last year's funding of \$88 million and 450,000 heating grants. That is why the ranking Democrat on the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee is continuing his fight for state funds for heating assistance.

The state currently has over \$100 million in a "rainy day" fund, another \$57 million that is scheduled to be put in the rainy day fund when the legislature returns in January, and \$40 to \$50 million put in the budget for the governor's proposed school voucher proposal that has not passed the legislature.

In appreciation for the president's action, Cappabianca invited Clinton to come to Pennsylvania and meet with the working families who receive this assistance and to visit Erie, a stop on then presidential-candidate Clinton's 1992 bus tour.

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# ***Pennsylvania House of Representatives Press Release***

**12/17/95**

**Cappabianca Thanks President Clinton for Releasing Winter Heating Funds; Asks Ridge to expand program; Invites the President to Pennsylvania in thanks**

**State Representative Italo Cappabianca, who unsuccessfully led Democrats efforts in Harrisburg last week to begin state funding for winter heating assistance praised President Clinton's leadership and courage for releasing 578 million dollars of funds this Sunday evening to the states. "Up to two hundred thousand Pennsylvania families will have a warm Christmas and holidays thanks to President Clinton," Cappabianca stated.**

**Cappabianca called upon Governor Ridge to immediately restart portions of the winter heating assistance program that were shut down because of the shortfall of federal funds. Before the government shutdown Pennsylvania had about \$18 million dollars of heating aid from this year federal budget and from savings from last year's program. From this new allocation, Cappabianca expects that Pennsylvania will receive another \$30 to \$40 million dollars.**

**Even with this new assistance, Cappabianca believes that Pennsylvania will fall at least 1/3rd below last years funding of \$88 million and 450,000 heating grants. That is why the ranking Democrat on the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee is continuing his fight for state funds for heating assistance. The state currently has over \$100 million dollars in a "rainy day" fund, another \$57 million dollars that is scheduled to be put in the rainy day fund when the legislature returns in January and 40 to 50 million dollars put in the budget for the Governor's proposed school voucher proposal that has not passed the legislature.**

**In appreciation for the President's action today, Cappabianca invited the President to come to Pennsylvania to meet with the working families who receive this assistance and to visit Erie, a stop on the 1992 Bus tour that he has not visited since. Rep. Cappabianca is available Sunday night at 717-232-6602.**