

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

December 4, 2019

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman, Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy
and Water Development
Committee on Appropriations
188 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Feinstein:

We write to urge your continued support for two key energy efficiency and clean energy programs within the Department of Energy, the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) and the State Energy Program (SEP), and urge you to adopt the highest possible funding levels for each program as you work to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions of the FY20 Energy and Water Development appropriations bills. A bipartisan group of 45 Senators sent a letter to you earlier this year in support of funding for these programs. These programs provide the foundation for energy efficiency and clean energy investments that create jobs, increase American competitiveness, save households and businesses money, and reduce pollution.

The Weatherization Assistance Program helps low-income families, seniors, and individuals with disabilities make lasting energy efficiency improvements to their homes. The reduced energy costs free up limited financial resources for essentials such as food and medicine. Throughout the history of the program, which has spanned more than four decades, WAP has helped more than 7.4 million low-income households reduce their energy bills. An independent study of WAP by Oak Ridge National Laboratory found that each Weatherization Assistance dollar produces \$4.50 in benefits, including energy savings. Using WAP, single-family homes have saved an average of \$283 annually on energy costs.

Energy savings are only a portion of the benefits from weatherization. The same study shows that the economic and health benefits of weatherization go far beyond permanently reducing energy costs. Children in weatherized households miss less school, improving educational outcomes. Adults miss less work, increasing both their own incomes and their contributions to economic growth. Families also experience fewer asthma symptoms and emergency room visits, decreasing out-of-pocket medical expenses by an average of \$514. WAP also leverages additional non-federal funds, while supporting over 8,500 jobs and increasing national economic output by \$1.2 billion.

The State Energy Program provides technical expertise and funding to states to improve their energy security, increase their energy efficiency, and to boost economic growth. SEP combines the scientific and economic knowledge of the Department of Energy with locally led planning to improve the energy efficiency of hospitals and schools, install clean energy projects, and support private sector energy innovation. A study by Oak Ridge National Laboratory shows

that every federal dollar invested in SEP leverages over \$10 for energy-related economic development and produces over \$7 in energy savings. The same study estimates that businesses reinvesting these energy savings into job-creating opportunities leads to thousands of jobs created per year.

We appreciate your efforts and your prioritization of programs that promote job growth and the growth of our nation's economy. We believe that investments in programs like WAP and SEP that reduce costs for American households and businesses, create greater economic competitiveness for our nation, and reduce pollution, should continue to receive funding.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to support these programs.

Sincerely,



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator