

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.C.R. 11
By: Chisum
Energy Resources
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) was established during the energy crises of the 1980s to help low-income and elderly people pay winter heating and summer cooling bills. Over 75% of Texans that receive LIHEAP assistance have incomes below the federal poverty guideline of \$9,500 a year, and all recipients have incomes below 125% of the federal poverty level (\$11,638).

Although LIHEAP is an essential federal program, it has an unfair allocation methodology that penalizes Texans. Two formulas dictate the allocation of the federal funds to the states. The problem with LIHEAP is that the formula that has allocated almost all the historic appropriations provides more help to residents of northern states where winter cold is acute.

The funding allocation formula that treats warmer weather states like Texas fairly has not been used since 1986. This is unfair to southern states like Texas where summer heat is life-threatening. According to the Southern States Energy Board (a federally sanctioned interstate compact that includes Texas), heat resulted in significantly more deaths than extreme cold between 1998 and 2000.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.C.R. 11 submits the following resolutions:

Respectfully urges Congress of the United States to increase funding and include advance funds for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and pursue a more equitable funding formula for the program.

Requesting that the Texas Secretary of State forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

The original HCR 11 urged Congress to increase funding, the substitute urges Congress to utilize “the most current “ state-specific population, as well as, fully fund the program at “the \$3.4 billion authorized.”