

February 11, 2015

Dr. David Danielson
Assistant Secretary, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
Department of Energy
Forrestal Building
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Assistant Secretary Danielson,

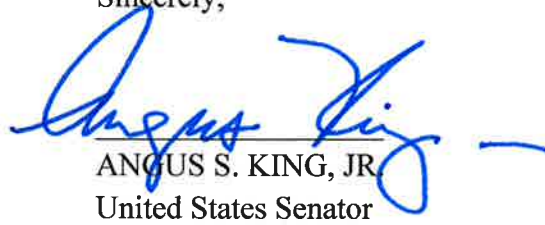
I am writing to you to address some concerns I have in regard to the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), which provides grants to states, territories, and some Indian tribes to improve the energy efficiency of the homes of low-income families. WAP, along with the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), are invaluable to households which face the dread of a cold winter without enough resources to keep warm. While I recognize that the WAP program has greatly helped families across the nation and in Maine, I believe that there are improvements that can be made to enhance this program's benefits, while remaining cost effective and maintaining high standards.

I understand from your office, as well as from Governor Paul LePage's office, that the administrators of WAP require a waiver if funds are to be used for fuel-switching as part of weatherization assistance. That is, if a low-income person would like to use WAP funds to switch from an inefficient and expensive oil furnace to a highly-efficient and cost-effective natural gas unit, then they must obtain a waiver. This process is both time-consuming and resource intensive. Often in Maine a heating system can become inoperable in the dead of winter, and yet even in a crisis situation like this, there are insurmountable logistical challenges to obtaining a waiver from the Department of Energy to transition the household from a heating oil system to a wood pellet or propane system. The administrators of WAP should instead develop a policy whereby no waiver is required as long as the WAP funds are used to switch to more fuel-efficient units, regardless of fuel source. Streamlining the WAP framework to include a standardized approach to fuel switching would allow more families to benefit from this cost-

saving measure – and help them to become less reliant on LIHEAP funds, as well as reduce emissions as older units are swapped out.

I encourage your office to standardize this process as soon as possible to continue to relieve the economic burden associated with heating a home. Thank you and I look forward to working with you to ensure the continued success of WAP.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Angus King", with a horizontal line underneath it. The signature is stylized and cursive.

ANGUS S. KING, JR.
United States Senator