



Sen. Roderick D. Wright

25th Senate District – Alondra Park, Athens, Compton, Gardena, Florence-Graham, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Ladera Heights, Lawndale, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Palos Verdes Peninsula, San Pedro, Watts, Westchester, Westmont, Willowbrook and Wilmington

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SENATOR WRIGHT, SOCALGAS, URGE CONGRESS TO INCREASE ENERGY ASSISTANCE FUNDING FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

LOS ANGELES, May 21, 2010 – Today, Senator Roderick D. Wright (D-Inglewood), Southern California Gas Co. (SoCalGas), and local community leaders urged Congress to approve \$5.2 billion in funding for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). LIHEAP is a federally funded grant that provides money to help low-income households make home heating and cooling more affordable.

The Obama administration plans to reduce LIHEAP funding by \$3.2 for fiscal year 2011, a nearly \$2 billion reduction in funding for the program. A funding cut of this size would be devastating to the vital program which currently benefits nearly 8.8 million low-income households in the United States.

“How can our citizens make it in this tough economy when they’re wondering if the power and gas are on at home,” said Senator Wright, who has joined a coalition of state lawmakers that is calling on Congress to expand LIHEAP.

In California, the number of households receiving LIHEAP increased by 162 percent from 2008 to 2009 and applications for LIHEAP in 2010 has increased by 20 percent.

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Millions of people have turned to LIHEAP to obtain economic relief from the home energy burden they are shouldering. The prospect of a hot summer offers little relief from this problem. It is essential that funding for LIHEAP should be maintained at a level where it serves those in need most effectively.

“We ask Congress to provide adequate funding for this important program that benefit so many in need -- especially during these challenging economic times,” said Michael W. Allman, president and chief executive officer for SoCalGas. “With unemployment in California exceeding the national average, LIHEAP funds can be a great help for many of our customers.”

SoCalGas has a number of programs to assist families who are having trouble making ends meet due to the slowdown of the economy. The utility has assistance programs to help reduce winter heating bills and increase energy efficiency. For more information please visit SoCalGas’ Web site at www.socalgas.com/extrahelp.

Senator Wright was elected to the California State Senate in 2008, and represents the 25th District which covers the communities of Alondra Park, Athens, Compton, Gardena, Florence-Graham, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Ladera Heights, Lawndale, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Palos Verdes Peninsula, San Pedro, Watts, Westchester, Westmont, and Willowbrook.

[Southern California Gas Co.](http://www.socalgas.com) has been delivering clean, safe and reliable natural gas to its customers for more than 140 years. It is the nation’s largest natural gas distribution utility, providing safe and reliable energy to 20.5 million consumers through 5.7 million meters in more than 500 communities. The company’s service territory encompasses approximately 20,000 square miles in diverse terrain throughout Central and Southern California, from Visalia to the Mexican border. Southern California Gas Co. is a regulated subsidiary of [Sempra Energy](http://www.sempraenergy.com) (NYSE: SRE). Sempra Energy, based in San Diego, is a Fortune 500 energy services holding company.

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