

**Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Block Grant
Allocation Plan Fiscal Year 2027**

Operation Fuel d/b/a Generation Power CT- Written Testimony

August 12, 2026

Submitted by Perkin Simpson, Chief Executive Officer



Dear esteemed Co-Chairs, Ranking Members and Members of the Appropriations, Energy & Technology and Human Services Committees:

Operation Fuel d/b/a Generation Power CT **Supports** the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) Block Grant Plan for Fiscal Year 2027.

Generation Power CT (GPCT) is a 501(c)3 private nonprofit founded in 1977 during the oil embargo, when energy price shocks destabilized household budgets and the national economy. Today, we continue to provide emergency energy and utility assistance to eligible Connecticut households experiencing financial crisis. Households who earn up to 75% of State Median Income (SMI), can apply during an open program cycle and upon approval would receive a one-time assistance grant up to \$500 towards a utility bill or one-time fuel delivery. More information can be found at <https://gpct.org/gethelp/>. For thousands of Connecticut households, **GPCT is the last option in an emergency.**

GPCT is a standing member of the Low-Income Energy and Water Advisory Board (LIEWAB), the provides recommendations and guidance for development and implementation of the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) plan each year. We thank Chair Claire Coleman of the Office of the Consumer Counsel (OCC), Vice Chair Nora Duncan of AARP and the Department of Social Service (DSS) Commissioner Andrea Barton Reeves and their teams for their leadership protecting vulnerable households during challenging times. We also thank the members of LIEWAB for their input, testimony and hard work.

Overall, while GPCT believes this plan will deliver life-saving assistance to families, more can be done to ensure families are able to be safe and warm their homes this winter.

It is critical for households in crisis to have stable, reliable assistance funding and clear communications. Vulnerable families can't afford to wait or wonder where to go when they need help right away. The FFY 2027 plan provides an increase in basic benefit levels, with a projected increase in demand and essentially the same amount of funds. While GPCT is supportive of higher benefit levels and expanding access to CEAP for Connecticut households, we warn lawmakers that with an increased number of application recipients, higher benefit levels, and fluctuating funding- there is potential that the program serves less households than projected, putting strain on an underfunded system.

GPCT is supportive of an expanded outreach campaign DSS will implement to connect more households with critical services. In addition to the existing outreach conducted, DSS will utilize "text message campaigns to inform potentially eligible households about available energy assistance resources and encourage early application." Connecting more families, especially

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those who wouldn't otherwise know, is essential to help families this winter and continued efforts to improve customer interaction and communications is a vital step forward.

GPCT is disappointed that the plan does not allocate any funds for weatherization measures this program year. As we know, Connecticut has an outdated housing stock. The more funds that are directed to remediating lead-based paints, asbestos, knob and tube wiring and poor ventilation - the safer our state's housing is for families.

As with each year, funding for energy assistance has not kept up with the level of demand there is. Families who struggle with exorbitant energy costs impact the whole system, and some do not seek assistance and are impacted by the benefit cliff in assistance eligibility. Simply put, Connecticut is not capturing all those families who are in need and more funding is necessary to meet the level of demand. Since 2022, there has been a substantial decrease in funding for LIHEAP:

	Post-COVID Funding ↓		ARPA Ends ↓		IJA Ends ↓	
	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Regular LIHEAP Block Grant	\$3.8 billion	\$4 billion	\$4.025 billion	\$4.025 billion	\$4.045 billion	Proposed: \$4.055 billion
American Rescue Plan (ARP) or Supplemental Funds	\$4.5 billion	\$2 billion				
Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)	\$100 million	\$100 million				
Total	\$8.4 billion	\$6.1 billion	\$4.125 billion	\$4.125 billion	\$4.145 billion	TBA

Source: National Energy & Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC) August 11th Presentation on state of LIHEAP

Historically, GPCT provided nearly year-round support for Connecticut families struggling to keep up with their home energy costs. As requests for assistance continues to grow far faster than our funding can support, our program cycles have gotten shorter. In Fiscal Year 2026 (which closed on June 30, 2026), GPCT provided more than \$2.7 million in assistance to 5,741 households. However, the average State Median Income (SMI) level reported by our clients was 31%, which averages for a household size of two, less than \$35,000 annually. Furthermore, 83% of GPCT clients requested more than \$500 in assistance. Our state must do more to address urgent affordability challenges for our most vulnerable residents.

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Additional funding is needed for both the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP) and Generation Power CT (GPCT). In a time of uncertainty and how unaffordable bills are, additional resources would bring stability to households in emergency. This investment will ensure more families are able to access emergency support and benefit the state's economy and small delivered fuel businesses - jobs that cannot be outsourced from our state.

We share a few client testimonials to show how impactful a grant from Generation Power CT can have on a family in an emergency situation:

- “This program has helped me stay in my home. Due to some debilitating health issues I was forced to retire before I had time to save enough to support the retirement. Now trying to pay for Medical Care, Hospitalizaions, Prescriptions, Taxes, Insurance, Food, etc on a fixed income during a time of rampant inflation is extremely difficult. Without this program I doubt I could stay in my home.”
- “We are proud people and really Hate asking for help One day we hope to pay help we have received forwarded.”

The hardest time to manage an emergency is when you are already in one. Medical challenges, job loss, and other life events strike when least expected. They don't correspond with a person's merit, geography, or political party. Limited-income households in our state continue struggling to pay for basic needs. We ask leaders in our state to keep vulnerable families top of mind.

This fiscal year, GPCT will be open for only three program cycles, accepting applications for energy assistance. During that time, we anticipate to serve approximately 5,000 Connecticut households and will prioritize those facing utility shutoff and low fuel emergencies first. Our water assistance applications for Aquarion Water, Connecticut Water Company and Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) are open year-round until all funding is exhausted.

GPCT is happy to talk with legislators and constituents about our programs. For more information about eligibility requirements and to access the online application, visit

www.gpct.org/gethelp.



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We all share the desire to keep our neighbors safe and warm. We would like to end with this client testimonial:

- “A little goes a long way; sometimes life gets hard and as a community it’s nice to see there are still people who are willing to donate to those in need. As a community it’s important we all stand together and contribute what we can when we can! I am happy to have received help. You truly never know the struggles people face daily with a smile on their face and still have no idea if they are going to have heat or hot water the next day. Living from day to day not knowing what life can and will throw at you... you just never know so I’m so thankful to get help from the community. I believe this is a great program and I hope it can help and grow to continue to help people the way it helped my family in the time of need.”

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony. If you have any questions, please reach out to Generation Power CT’s Chief Policy & Public Affairs Officer, Gannon Long, at gannon@gpct.org

Sincerely,

Perkin Simpson
Chief Executive Officer
Operation Fuel d/b/a Generation Power CT