

St. Lawrence County
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, INC.

February 25, 2026

Dear Chair Krueger and Chair Pretlow,

Please accept this correspondence as submission of our written testimony for the 2026 Joint Legislative Budget Hearing on Housing on February 25, 2026.

We are gravely concerned about the proposal to redirect the longstanding 10% HEAP allocation away from the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP). Such a change would eliminate nearly 60% of our program funding, destabilizing decades of infrastructure, jeopardizing trained staff positions, and sharply reducing access to essential services for the most vulnerable households in our community.

St. Lawrence County is one of the Coldest Counties in New York State. The Statewide average savings for consumers who benefit from Weatherization delivers \$1.72 in energy savings and \$2.78 in non-energy and health and safety benefits for each \$1 spent. Thousands of economically disadvantaged families in communities within St. Lawrence County have been weatherized using the 10% HEAP allocations. By installing smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, lives have been saved. Faulty appliances have been repaired or replaced that might otherwise have caused disastrous results. New Yorkers are seeing double utility cost increase as well as higher heating costs. Low-income families need this weatherization HEAP funding to help lower costs for these economically disadvantaged household. Currently, St. Lawrence County has a weatherization wait list of 384 clients, all of whom are disadvantaged homeowners. This number does not include the Renter wait list. Again, HEAP represents 60% of our funding.

Weatherization is not an option; it is essential for infrastructure for climate action, Housing stability, public health, energy affordability, and job creation. We respectfully urge the Legislature to make the continued the 10% HEAP allocation in the State Operations Bill and to ensure WAP remains a protected, fully funded component of New York's housing and climate strategy. There is clear, statutory language in the one-house budget requiring that 10% of the HEAP funding continue to be allocated to the Weatherization Assistance Program.

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Thank you for your leadership, time, for prioritizing programs that protect the most vulnerable New Yorkers living in disadvantage communities as well as for your continued dedication to supporting New Yorkers most in need. St. Lawrence County stands ready to work with you to ensure that Weatherization remains strong, effective, and fully funded for the next 50 years and beyond.

Respectfully,

Barbara Adams

Executive Director

St. Lawrence County Community Development Program, Inc.