

*URGES RELEASE OF LIHEAP FUNDS AND FORMULATION OF LONG TERM PLAN*

Washington – Today, Congressman John Olver (1st-MA) joined other members of the bi-partisan LIHEAP Caucus. "Prices have remained high since last winter's crisis, and reserves are dangerously low. In addition to calling for a \$1 billion increase in total LIHEAP funding over the next two years, Olver is urging Secretary Richardson to release LIHEAP funds immediately. "Increasing LIHEAP funding will help in the short term, but we need to think beyond the immediate crisis. Secretary Richardson's response to the concerns of the New England LIHEAP Caucus was disappointing. Last week, Olver signed letters to President Clinton and Secretary Richardson urging immediate action. "Looking at current heating oil stocks, it is clear that prices will only go up as the weather turns colder."

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