



WASHINGTON STATE COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP

WSCAP works to build healthy communities and eliminate poverty through a unified network of Community Action Agencies across Washington State.

February 2, 2022

Dear Legislative Leaders,

The COVID-19 Pandemic has reaffirmed the importance of safe and healthy housing. Washington State's innovative Low-Income Weatherization Plus Health (Wx+H) program effectively addresses the intersection of housing, health, and climate equity like few other programs. **We urge you to support the Governor's request to restore \$10 million in baseline funding for the program and to make an additional one-time \$37 million investment to ramp up the program to leverage federal infrastructure funding, expand statewide access to healthy home interventions, and fund training and technical assistance for workforce and contractor development.**

Weatherization Plus Health is a statewide program that effectively doubles resources to make the homes of low-income people more affordable, efficient and healthy. Not only do these investments save families money on utility bills, they also create local family-wage jobs, reduce carbon emissions, and enhance quality of life for residents.

Here are just a few reasons Weatherization continues to be an excellent use of state funds and worthy of ongoing support:

- **Housing affordability through efficiency:** Weatherization brings immediate energy transition benefits into communities that have the highest energy burden. Home energy use is reduced by 25% on average in weatherized homes, which helps low-income families save over \$300 a year and frees up other utility assistance resources to serve more households.
- **Getting upstream to promote health and educational equity:** The "Plus Health" innovation allows for services like flooring replacement and ventilation retrofits that promote accessibility, prevent slips/trips/falls, and reduce asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Weatherization Plus Health's multi-pronged strategy makes positive physical health impacts that in turn reduce family stress and increase children's long-term educational outcomes. Inconsistent state funding for the program means Plus Health currently reaches only 5-10% of homes receiving weatherization services.
- **Statewide benefits:** The program is built on cross-sector partnerships in all 39 counties. These partnerships create and sustain contractor and crew jobs across the state, in addition to outcomes in affordability, efficiency, health, and other benefits.
- **Leverage additional investments:** By requiring a one-to-one match from partners, Weatherization Plus Health doubles the state's investment by leveraging additional funds from communities, utility resources, rental owners, and other sources. Over \$55 million in highly-restricted federal Weatherization Assistance through President Biden's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act will arrive later this year, which will renew conversations about dramatically increasing our state's regular

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contribution to the program in future budgets to meet the demands of federal funding and the goals of the State Energy Strategy.

The Legislature has funded Weatherization in every biennium since 1991 and this has allowed our state to develop a program that is on the national forefront. But even from that position, our current resources fail to meet the need for so many families facing energy poverty and living in unhealthy indoor conditions. **Please ensure the final Supplemental Budget includes \$47 million for Low-Income Weatherization Plus Health.**

Thank you for your leadership in putting families first this session.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff DeLuca". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Jeff DeLuca
Executive Director
Washington State Community Action Partnership

Coalition Partners

Washington Environmental Council
Washington Conservation Voters
Shift Zero
Firelands Workers Action
Rainier Audubon Society
Puget Sound Energy
AmeriGroup
On The Road, Community Health Care of Tacoma
Elevate Health
CHOICE Regional Health Network and Cascade Pacific Action Alliance
Community Visions
Our Sisters House
Emerald Cities Collaborative
Sustainability Ambassadors
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350 Tacoma
350 Everett
350 Seattle

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Environmental Caucus, 43rd Legislative District Democrats
PCA Woodinville
Brandon Stearns
Richart Family Inc.
People for Climate Action Issaquah Chapter
People for Climate Action Seattle
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People for Climate Action
34th District Democratic EELU Caucus

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Kirsten Smith
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