

HEATING ASSISTANCE & RESOURCES

**State Rep. Kate Hogan, 3rd Middlesex District
Bolton Hudson Maynard Stow**

Dear Friends,

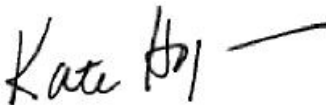
Autumn in our region is beautiful, but veteran New Englanders know that cold weather is right around the corner. That means it's time to think about, and plan for, heating our homes over the winter. Unfortunately, due to high natural gas and oil prices stemming from the Russia-Ukrainian war and other factors, heating and electricity utility bills are predicted to dramatically increase this winter.

Following is a list of resources that can help. In addition, the Baker-Polito Administration is consulting with the federal government to create a winter heating plan, which we will share once available.

The Councils on Aging (COAs) in our towns are on hand to help our seniors with information, referrals and support when applying for fuel assistance. Give them a call if you need assistance or want to learn more.

If you have questions or need help, please contact me at Kate.Hogan@mahouse.gov or 617-722-2600.

Best,



Kate Hogan
State Representative
Third Middlesex District
kate.hogan@mahouse.gov
(617) 722-2600

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AUDITS

If you haven't done so recently, a good first plan of action is correcting energy inefficiencies. The nation-leading [Mass Save](#) energy efficiency programs run by the Massachusetts investor-owned utilities can provide residents with information about how to reduce their energy use. This should lead to lower bills over time.

In addition, income-eligible renters and owners can qualify for no-cost energy upgrades to their home through Mass Save's [Low-Income Energy Affordability Network \(LEAN\)](#) program.

UTILITY PAYMENT PLANS

Most utilities in Massachusetts offer flexible payment plans, regardless of income, and potential balance forgiveness. Enrolling in a payment plan can protect customers against shutoffs for up to 12 months with most utility companies. Contact your utility to determine whether a payment program is the right option for you.

Eversource

Eastern Mass: 866-861-6225

Western Mass: 877-963-2632

National Grid

800-322-3223

Hudson Light & Power

978-568-8736

INCOME-ELIGIBLE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Homeowners and renters whose household incomes do not exceed 60 percent of the estimated state median income -- \$81,561 in a four-person household in fiscal year 2023 -- can apply for fuel assistance through the federal **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**. To learn more and apply for assistance, call the Cold Relief Heatline (800) 632-8175 or visit these Community Action Agencies:

South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc. (SMOC) at 7 Bishop S. in Framingham or call SMOC at (508) 872-0765 or call the Maynard Council on Aging at (978) 897-1009.

Good Neighbor Energy Fund If you don't qualify for federally funded assistance programs, you can apply for the Salvation Army's Good Neighbor Energy Fund. The Good Neighbor Energy Fund provides utility assistance to qualifying families in the middle-income level.

For more information on these services, please contact the Framingham Corps at (508) 875-3341 or visit them at 350 Union Avenue, Framingham, MA 01702.

To make a contribution to the Good Neighbor Energy Fund, please visit the Salvation Army's

WINTER HEATING SHUT-OFF PROTECTIONS

Massachusetts residents are protected by Massachusetts law ([MGL c.164, § 124F](#)) from having their gas or electric utilities shutoff from November 15, 2022, to March 15, 2023 if those services are used for heating. Constituents will still be responsible for any unpaid bills when the shutoff ends. The Attorney General's office encourages customers to enroll in a utility payment plan, which also provides shutoff protections, and avoids accumulating debt. As stated above, most utilities offer payment plans for up to 12 months.