

## REP. KATE HOGAN'S SENIOR NEWS



### Stay Warm and Connected this Winter

I hope that you – and those you care about – are healthy and safe. As winter approaches, I also hope you have the resources you need to stay warm and connected. I want to share the information about resources that are available, including payment assistance programs and other options to lower utility bills.

### Call Your Utility Company About Payment Plans

Massachusetts utility companies are offering several financial assistance programs for both residential and small business customers impacted by the pandemic, including budget billing, which equalizes monthly payments over the year, as well as flexible payment plans and balance forgiveness programs for those eligible. If you are experiencing difficulty in paying monthly bills, contact your provider as soon as possible and inquire about available assistance programs and other ways to reduce energy use and lower bills. Residential and small business customers who enroll in and follow a payment plan with their utility company are protected from having their service shut off for the duration of the plan.

### Correct Energy Inefficiencies

Reviewing energy costs and weatherization options can reduce energy inefficiencies, save money and make your home more comfortable. Consider contacting Mass Save for an energy efficiency audit, which should result in lower monthly utility bills over time. Eversource also offers home energy savings solutions for home owners, renters and landlords.

### Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Residents who are experiencing a loss of income are urged to consult with their utility to see if they may qualify for the utility's low-income rate, arrearage management programs (AMP), or the federal Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Customers may qualify for low-income assistance, even if they haven't in the past, as eligibility is based on the last four weeks of gross household income. The AMP provides for an individualized payment plan that, if followed, allows the customer to have forgiven all or a portion of an outstanding unpaid balance. In order to qualify for LIHEAP, customers must have a household income that does not exceed 60 percent of the state median income. Residents who are struggling to pay their bills are also encouraged to contact their local Community Action Network to determine if they qualify for available financial assistance.

### 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 can help Massachusetts residents experiencing a temporary crisis which has left them without enough money to pay their utility bill, but do not qualify for federally funded assistance programs. To apply for assistance, contact your local Salvation Army Assistance Center.

To make a contribution to the Good Neighbor Energy Fund, please visit the Salvation Army's website. You can also mail a check payable to "Good Neighbor Energy Fund" directly to The Salvation Army:

Good Neighbor Energy Fund  
25 Shawmut Road  
Canton MA 02021-1408

Customers who have concerns about their utility rights during the public health crisis should contact the AG's consumer assistance hotline at 617-727-8400 or file a complaint online at <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/file-a-consumer-complaint>

**Contact Rep. Hogan:** The health and safety of my constituents is my top priority as your state representative. My office is always here to help you navigate available resources if you are at all concerned about paying your heating bill this winter. If you need assistance or would like to contact me, please call me at (617) 722-2199 or email me at [Kate.Hogan@mahouse.gov](mailto:Kate.Hogan@mahouse.gov).

Happy Thanksgiving to all!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate".

Kate Hogan, State Representative

Proudly represents Bolton, Hudson, Maynard, and Stow

State House, Room 163, Boston, MA, 02133 / Phone: (617) 722-2199 / [Kate.Hogan@mahouse.gov](mailto:Kate.Hogan@mahouse.gov)

District Office: Maynard Town Hall, 195 Main Street, Maynard, MA 01754 / Phone: (978) 897-1333