The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Chairman, Energy and Water  
Development Subcommittee  
Committee on Appropriations  
115 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Ranking Member, Energy and Water  
Development Subcommittee  
Committee on Appropriations  
119 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Feinstein:

We write to urge your continued support for key energy efficiency and clean energy programs within the Department of Energy: the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) and the State Energy Program (SEP). These programs provide the foundation for clean energy investments that create jobs, increase American competitiveness, save families and businesses money through improved efficiency, and reduce pollution. While we understand the challenges in developing an appropriations bill in a constrained fiscal environment, we respectfully request that you fund WAP at $230 million and SEP at $70 million for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017.

The Weatherization Assistance Program helps low-income families, seniors, and individuals with disabilities make lasting energy efficiency improvements to their homes, freeing up finite resources for other essentials like food and medicine. For over 30 years, WAP has provided weatherization services to more than 7.3 million low-income households, reducing their annual energy bills by an average of $437. Those savings can stay within the local economy and have a large multiplier effect, spurring further job growth and economic development.

Indeed, a study by Oak Ridge National Laboratory found that weatherization saves single-family home on average $283 in annual energy cost savings, which benefits not only the household but the local economy. The study notes that WAP and leveraged expenditures supported directly and indirectly 8,500 jobs and increased national economic output by $1.2 billion. Restoring funding for WAP closer to its historic funding levels, at $230 million, with $5 million for training and technical assistance, will ensure that states have the resources to support their weatherization programs that help reduce the burden of high energy prices on low-income families.

The State Energy Program allows states to assist with the development of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, such as improving the efficiency of hospitals and schools, working with utilities and energy service companies to install clean energy and energy efficiency projects, and supporting private sector energy innovations through business incubators and job training. Similar to WAP, each dollar of SEP funding produces significant returns.
Another study, also by the Oakridge National Laboratory, found that every $50 million of SEP federal funds resulted in $585 million in economic development. As such, we respectfully request that this program be funded at $70 million, the same level as included in the President's FY17 budget request.

We appreciate your efforts and your prioritization of programs that promote job growth and the growth of our nation's economy. We believe that investments in programs like WAP and SEP that reduce costs for both individuals and businesses, and create greater economic competitiveness for our nation, should be maintained and robustly funded.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and we look forward to working with you on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Jack Reed
United States Senator

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

Patrick Leahy
United States Senator

Dan Sullivan
United States Senator

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator
Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator

Brian Schatz  
United States Senator

Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator

Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator

Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

Robert Menendez  
United States Senator

Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator

Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator

Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator

Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator
Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator

Kirsten E. Gillibrand  
United States Senator

Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator

Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator

Tim Kaine  
United States Senator

Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator