

# TOWN OF FALMOUTH, MAINE



## Memorandum

To: Town Council

From: Ellen Planer, Town Clerk

Re: Town of Falmouth - 2013 Local Fuel Assistance Program

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I am writing this memo to respond to Councilor Varney's inquiry concerning the 2013 Falmouth Fuel Fund. With Federal funding being cut dramatically and changes in the federal guidelines, families in need are receiving less assistance, or not qualifying at all.

The Town of Falmouth has offered a fuel assistance program since 2008. This program has been funded by the town along with generous donations from individuals and organizations we have contributed over \$50,000 and served over 200 households.

Low Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funds from the federal government have been dramatically cut for this heating season, falling from \$54 million in 2011 to 38.5 million this year. LIHEAP funds are distributed through the local CAP, Opportunity Awareness (formerly known as PROP). There are other sources for heating assistance including Keep ME Warm program (distributed through Opportunity Alliance), Falmouth Food Pantry and local churches.

Several residents have expressed concern for the need to maintain or expand the program this year. Last year, residents Steve Carew and Teresa Piece organized a successful outreach campaign to support the fund. This campaign raised 9,500 in private donations.

I am recommending that the Town Council support an initiative that will include the following:

- A. Seek interest from interested citizens, including members of the Town Council appointed Human Services Committee, to assist with a campaign to raise private funds to support the heating assistance program.
- B. Utilize the Town website, Cable Ch 2, news media and other methods of communication to promote the fundraising campaign.
- C. Coordinate distribution efforts to maximize most efficient use of funds, such coordination to include the Food Pantry and Opportunity Alliance LIHEAP program.
- D. Town Council action to approve an order that will authorize an appropriation in the

amount of \$10,000.

- E. Establish a goal to raise \$10,000 in private funding, combined with the Town contribution for a total of \$20,000.