

RESOLUTION NO. 16-_____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE
TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING
ADEQUATE FUNDING OF THE LOW INCOME HOME
ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP);
PROVIDING AUTHORIZATION TO TOWN MAYOR;
PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL DIRECTIONS TO THE
CLERK; PROVIDING FOR INCORPORATION OF
RECITALS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE
DATE**

WHEREAS, the Town of Miami Lakes (the “Town”) recognizes utility service to be a vital key to the health, safety and well-being of Florida households and families; and

WHEREAS, poverty, unemployment and the slow economic recovery remain persistent national problems for many, and household expenses remain a burden on low-income households; and

WHEREAS, low-income families in Florida disproportionately spend about three times more of their income on basic energy services than the typical middle-income American family; and

WHEREAS, homes in low-income and minority communities severely lack energy efficiency features that enable lower energy bills; and

WHEREAS, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provides vital heating and cooling assistance to low-income families, including working-poor households, senior citizens, persons with disabilities and veterans; and

WHEREAS, the severe constraints on state budgets and the increased strain on the nation’s support system provided by nonprofit, faith-based and other community organizations have reduced other resources available for energy assistance; and

WHEREAS, the primary Federal program providing assistance to low-income households to pay high heating bills is the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP); and

WHEREAS, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has been an effective and successful program in meeting the energy needs of low-income elderly, disabled, veterans and poor working households, and those making the difficult transition from welfare to work, throughout the United States, including Florida; and

WHEREAS, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is not an entitlement, but rather a targeted block grant program which provides flexible Federal-State partnerships and is the foundation for many programs authorized by state public utility commissions to assist low-income customers to meet their bill payment obligations through direct assistance; to prevent service terminations during cold and hot weather emergencies; to make the transition from public assistance to economic self-reliance; to help low-income households remain economically self-sufficient; and

WHEREAS, federal LIHEAP funding has declined from \$5.1 billion in 2010 to \$3.4 billion in 2015; and

WHEREAS, less than 135,000 Florida households received LIHEAP assistance in 2014, or less than ten (10%) of all eligible; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association, many low-income families “will have few choices but to cut back on essential necessities, such as medicine, food, and clothing”; and

WHEREAS, The National Energy and Utility Affordability Coalition (NEUAC) and other consumer advocate groups support increased LIHEAP funding and have asked that LIHEAP funding be increased to \$4.7 billion for FY 2016, which is the fully authorized funding level approved in the Energy Policy Act of 2005; and

WHEREAS, another impactful solution to increase Florida’s share of funding, without increasing the overall federal LIHEAP budget, is for Congressional budget appropriators to simply “follow enabling law” – the allocation formula actually prescribed by Congress. Florida and other states (especially warm weather states) in great need would see a significant increase in their LIHEAP share, as the enabling law recognizes the dangers of extreme heat as well as extreme cold. It also factors in energy costs and the most recent demographics of population and poverty. In fact, the Congressional Research Service’s latest (June 25, 2015) estimate confirmed that Florida would conservatively gain an additional \$38.5 million in LIHEAP funding - or 55% - if appropriations adhered to LIHEAP’s enabling law. This is with no increase in the current federal funding total of \$3.39 billion.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE TOWN OF MIAMI LAKES, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Recitals. The foregoing recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein by reference.

Section 2. Expressing Support of LIHEAP Funding Appropriations. The Town Council hereby expresses its support and urges the Appropriations Committee of the United States House of Representatives and Congress to appropriate LIHEAP funding of at least \$3.39 billion in the FY 2016 budget; and that Congress follow the enabling law when determining appropriations by state.

Section 3. Authorization of Town Mayor. The Town Mayor is authorized to take all actions reasonably necessary to implement this Resolution.

Section 4. Transmittal Directions to Clerk. The Town Clerk is directed to send a certified copy of this resolution to the members of Congress specifically serving the Town of Miami Lakes seeking their support of continued funding for this program.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption.

THIS SPACE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Passed and adopted this 3rd day of May, 2016.

The foregoing resolution was moved by _____. The motion was seconded by _____ and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Mayor Michael A. Pizzi, Jr. _____

Vice Mayor Tim Daubert _____

Councilmember Manny Cid _____

Councilmember Tony Lama _____

Councilmember Ceasar Mestre _____

Councilmember Frank Mingo _____

Councilmember Nelson Rodriguez _____

Michael A. Pizzi, Jr.
MAYOR

Attest:

Gina Inguanzo
TOWN CLERK

Approved as to form and legal sufficiency:

Raul Gastesi, Jr.
Gastesi & Associates, P.A.
TOWN ATTORNEY