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**WILDFIRE LAUDS GOVERNOR HOBBS' EFFORTS PROTECTING ARIZONANS
FROM HISTORIC HEAT; WILL MATCH \$500K IN DONATIONS FOR
HVAC REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT**

PHOENIX, Ariz. (Aug. xx, 2023): Governor Katie Hobbs' actions to protect Arizonans from the historic heat wave is "a critical step at a critical time to address the impact of high heat on individuals, families and communities across the state, particularly for those struggling financially to address and adapt to the record-breaking temperatures," said Wildfire Acting Executive Director Kelly McGowan.

To that end, Wildfire will match up to \$500,000 in donations to repair and replace HVAC units for qualifying low-income individuals at no cost to them.

"The record-breaking heat is also contributing to Arizona's housing crisis," McGowan said. "With evictions at a 15-year high, keeping low-income Arizonans safely housed during record-breaking heat has never been more important."

Gov. Hobbs' Executive Order for "Extreme Heat Planning and Preparedness," declared an emergency in Maricopa, Pinal and Coconino counties and made additional funds available.

In the Executive Order, Gov. Hobbs cited the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) that "helps families pay their heating and cooling bills, minimize crises and make energy bills mor affordable through weatherization assistance."

"The Governor highlighted one of LIHEAP's biggest, and most troubling, challenges when she said that LIHEAP was originally designed for cold-weather states and not to support

states experiencing extreme summer energy cycles like Arizona,” McGowan said. “The result is that Arizona receives the second-lowest allocation of federal LIHEAP dollars per capita nationwide and that puts a burden on Community Action Agencies statewide who are trying to help individuals and families with their air conditioning challenges.”

McGowan said that Wildfire “is extremely grateful for the governor’s call for more LIHEAP funding. In the meantime, we will continue to advocate for additional LIHEAP funding to better address the impacts of heat and even cold in the winter.”

Currently through LIHEAP, eligible households may receive up to \$1,200 a year and an additional \$1,000 in supplemental benefits for applicable crisis situations in a 12-month period.

In her order, Gov. Hobbs also announced an historic \$210 million investment in affordable housing and fighting homelessness and direct coordination with utilities to better address heat response.

McGowan said public donations also can be made to support utility bill assistance efforts in Arizona by visiting www.wildfireaz.org.

“Gov. Hobbs’ leadership in addressing these heat-related challenges will make a difference in thousands of lives,” McGowan said.

For more information about Wildfire services and programs, including about HVAC repair and replacements, utility-bill assistance and locations of Community Action Agencies statewide, visit www.wildfireaz.org.

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About Wildfire: Wildfire is a growing movement to end poverty. We advocate for fair practices. We collaborate on policy issues. We support community action initiatives. Beyond easing the effects of poverty, our efforts aim to ignite lasting change: to stop poverty before it starts. This is advocacy in action for an Arizona where all may thrive. For more information visit wildfireaz.org.