

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
119TH LEGISLATURE
SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE AMENDMENT "A" to H.P. 1496, L.D. 2140, Bill, "An Act to Enhance the Economic Security of Low-income Households with Respect to Utility Service"

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the enacting clause and before the summary and inserting in its place the following:

Sec. 1. 35-A MRSA §4706-A is enacted to read:

§4706-A. Low-income customer assistance

To the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose from the General Fund, the commission may establish a bill payment assistance program for residential customers who have been certified as eligible for state or federal fuel assistance that takes into account the difficulty these customers have paying in full for natural gas service and that targets assistance to these customers in the most efficient manner. If the commission establishes a program under this section, the commission shall adopt rules governing the distribution of funds. The commission shall consult with the Maine State Housing Authority in developing a program under this section. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter II-A.

Sec. 2. Appropriation. The following funds are appropriated from the General Fund to carry out the purposes of this Act.

H. 95

2000-01

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PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Low-income Customer Assistance

All Other \$136,856

Provides for the appropriation of funds to implement a bill payment assistance program for low-income natural gas customers.'

FISCAL NOTE

This amendment increases the General Fund cost of the bill by \$136,856 in fiscal year 2000-01.

As amended, this bill includes a General Fund appropriation of \$136,856 in fiscal year 2000-01 for the Public Utilities Commission to implement a payment assistance program for residential low-income natural gas customers. Future costs associated with this program will depend on the number of new natural gas customers that are certified as eligible for state or federal fuel assistance. These costs can not be determined at this time.

The Public Utilities Commission will require a General Fund appropriation beginning in fiscal year 2000-01 to administer a payment assistance program for residential low-income natural gas customers. The amount can not be determined at this time.

The Public Utilities Commission will incur some minor additional costs to approve discount rates or payment assistance programs for low-income natural gas customers. These costs can be absorbed within the commission's existing budgeted resources.

The Maine State Housing Authority will incur some minor additional costs to consult with the Public Utilities Commission regarding the development of a payment assistance program for residential low-income natural gas customers. These costs can be absorbed within the authority's existing budgeted resources.

SUMMARY


This amendment permits the Public Utilities Commission to establish a bill payment assistance program for residential

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HOUSE AMENDMENT "*A*" to H.P. 1496, L.D. 2140

2 low-income customers of natural gas utilities. The program must
3 be funded by the General Fund and the distribution of funds
4 administered by the Public Utilities Commission. This amendment
5 also adds an appropriation section to the bill.

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SPONSORED BY: 
(Representative WATERHOUSE)

TOWN: Bridgton

HOUSE AMENDMENT