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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 767 Session of  
2023

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INTRODUCED BY BOSCOLA, FARRY, BARTOLOTTA, SCHWANK, BREWSTER,  
COMITTA, DILLON, FLYNN, HAYWOOD, KEARNEY, PENNYCUICK AND  
REGAN, JUNE 14, 2023

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REFERRED TO CONSUMER PROTECTION AND PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE,  
JUNE 14, 2023

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AN ACT

1 Amending the act of June 13, 1967 (P.L.31, No.21), entitled "An  
2 act to consolidate, editorially revise, and codify the public  
3 welfare laws of the Commonwealth," in general powers and  
4 duties of the Department of Public Welfare, providing for  
5 Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program; and making an  
6 editorial change.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. Article II heading of the act of June 13, 1967  
10 (P.L.31, No.21), known as the Human Services Code, is amended to  
11 read:

12 ARTICLE II

13 GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES

14 OF THE DEPARTMENT OF [PUBLIC WELFARE] HUMAN SERVICES

15 Section 2. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

16 Section 217. Low-Income Household Water Assistance  
17 Program.--(a) No later than July 1, 2024, the department, in  
18 consultation with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission,  
19 shall establish the Low-Income Household Water Assistance

1 Program, to be administered by the department.

2 (b) The purpose of the program is to provide assistance for  
3 eligible individuals who are water system customers or  
4 wastewater system customers, or both, in this Commonwealth, for  
5 overdue water system bills or wastewater system bills, or both,  
6 upon the termination of the temporary Federal Low-Income  
7 Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP).

8 (c) The department shall develop eligibility requirements  
9 under the program in accordance with this subsection, without  
10 limitation. An individual eligible for assistance under the  
11 program must:

12 (1) Own or rent a home in this Commonwealth.

13 (2) Be a water system customer or wastewater system  
14 customer, or both, and be financially responsible for paying the  
15 water system bills or wastewater system bills, or both.

16 (3) Have an overdue water system bill or wastewater system  
17 bill, which has resulted in arrearages, a termination notice or  
18 the termination of water system services or wastewater system  
19 services, or both.

20 (4) Meet certain income guidelines as determined by the  
21 department.

22 (d) A water system entity or wastewater system entity may  
23 apply for a grant under the program on behalf of eligible  
24 individuals described under subsection (c) on a form and in a  
25 manner determined by the department. A completed application  
26 must contain:

27 (1) The name and contact information of the water system  
28 entity or wastewater system entity seeking the grant.

29 (2) The names and addresses of the water system customers or  
30 wastewater system customers seeking assistance under the

1 program, along with verification of their eligibility to receive  
2 services under the program.

3 (3) The amount of the overdue water system bills or  
4 wastewater system bills for the customers seeking assistance  
5 under the program, along with the circumstances that have  
6 resulted from the overdue bills, including arrearages,  
7 termination notices or termination of services.

8 (e) The department shall review each application under  
9 subsection (d) and determine the amount of the grant to be  
10 awarded, including the designated individuals eligible to  
11 receive assistance under the program and any conditions  
12 regarding the award of the grant.

13 (f) A grant under the program may only be used to:

14 (1) Prevent the termination of water system services or  
15 wastewater system services, or both.

16 (2) Pay past-due water system bills or wastewater system  
17 bills, or both.

18 (3) Restore terminated water system services or wastewater  
19 system services, or both.

20 (g) The following apply to reports:

21 (1) Each July 1 following the effective date of this  
22 subsection, the department shall issue a report on:

23 (i) The water system entities and wastewater system entities  
24 that have sought a grant under the program.

25 (ii) The water system entities and wastewater system  
26 entities that have received a grant under the program.

27 (iii) The number of customers who received assistance under  
28 the program, along with the amount and purpose of the grant  
29 received by each customer.

30 (iv) The total amount of money expended under the program.

1 (2) The department shall submit each report under this  
2 subsection to the following:

3 (i) The Governor.

4 (ii) The President pro tempore of the Senate.

5 (iii) The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

6 (iv) The Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the Senate.

7 (v) The Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the House of  
8 Representatives.

9 (vi) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
10 Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee of the  
11 Senate.

12 (vii) The chairperson and minority chairperson of the  
13 Consumer Protection, Technology and Utilities Committee of the  
14 House of Representatives.

15 (3) Each report under this subsection shall be posted on the  
16 publicly accessible Internet website of the department.

17 (h) Rulemaking authority.--The department shall promulgate  
18 any rules, regulations or guidelines necessary to implement this  
19 section.

20 (i) As used in this section, the following words and phrases  
21 shall have the following meanings:

22 "Program" means the Low-Income Household Water Assistance  
23 Program established under subsection (a).

24 "Wastewater system" means as the term "sewer system" is  
25 defined under 25 Pa. Code § 94.1 (relating to definitions).

26 "Water system" means a public water system that serves at  
27 least fifteen service connections used by year-round residents  
28 or regularly serves at least twenty-five year-round residents.

29 Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.