

Legislative Analysis



MICHIGAN ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SUNSET

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

Senate Bill 288 as reported from House committee

Sponsor: Sen. Sam Singh

House Committee: Energy, Communications, and Technology

Senate Committee: Energy and Environment

Revised 6-23-23

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 288 would amend the Michigan Energy Assistance Act to repeal a section that now provides that the act will no longer apply after September 30, 2023. (These sorts of provisions are sometimes known as “sunset provisions” or simply “sunsets.”)

The Michigan Energy Assistance Act requires the Department of Health and Human Services to establish and administer the Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP).¹ The program provides assistance to eligible low-income households in meeting their home energy costs through payment or partial payment of their bills for electricity, natural gas, propane, heating oil, or other heating fuels. The assistance also includes services that will enable participants to become more self-sufficient in minimizing, budgeting, and paying their energy costs. The department, in consultation, with the Michigan Public Service Commission, can contract with public or private entities, including local units of government, to provide energy assistance.

The Michigan Energy Assistance Act was enacted in 2012 and went into effect March 28, 2013. The act originally included a section providing that it would no longer apply after September 30, 2016. This expiration date has been extended twice—to September 30, 2019, and to September 30, 2023. The bill would repeal this section, eliminating the act’s sunset entirely.

MCL 400.1236 (repealed)

FISCAL IMPACT:

Eliminating the sunset provision for the Michigan Energy Assistance Program would have no fiscal impact on the state or on local units of government.

POSITIONS:

A representative of DTE testified in support of the bill. (6-14-23)

The following entities indicated support for the bill:

- Michigan Public Service Commission (6-14-23)
- Consumers Energy (6-14-23)
- Michigan Electric and Gas Association (6-14-23)
- Michigan League for Public Policy (6-14-23)

¹ <https://www.michigan.gov/mpsc/consumer/energy-assistance>

- Michigan League of Conservation Voters (6-14-23)
- Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm (6-14-23)
- Indiana Michigan Power Co. (6-14-23)
- United Way of South Central Michigan (6-14-23)
- SEMCO (6-14-23)
- Michigan Environmental Council (6-14-23)
- Salvation Army (6-14-23)
- The Heat and Warmth Fund (THAW) (6-14-23)
- Michigan Community Action (6-14-23)
- National Action Network (6-21-23)
- NAACP (6-21-23)
- Michigan LCV (6-21-23)
- Clean Water Action (6-21-23)
- La Sed Inc. (6-21-23)
- Cares in Farmington Hills (6-21-23)

The Mackinac Center for Public Policy indicated opposition to the bill. (6-21-23)

Legislative Analyst: Rick Yuille
Fiscal Analysts: Kent Dell

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.