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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD SESSION

H. F. No. 2493

03/02/2023 Authored by Kraft, Hornstein, Greenman, Stephenson, Sencer-Mura and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Climate and Energy Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to energy; appropriating money for supplemental energy assistance;
1.3 requiring an annual report; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes,
1.4 chapter 216C.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. [216C.391] SUPPLEMENTAL ENERGY ASSISTANCE FUND.

1.7 Subdivision 1. Account established. (a) A supplemental energy assistance fund account
1.8 is created in the special revenue fund in the state treasury. Money in the account is
1.9 appropriated to the commissioner to expand the number of Minnesota households that
1.10 receive energy assistance under LIHEAP and make the program available year-round.

1.11 (b) For purposes of this section, "LIHEAP" means the low-income home energy assistance
1.12 program under United States Code, title 42, sections 8621 to 8630, and administered by the
1.13 department.

1.14 Subd. 2. Use of funds. (a) Money in the account may be used for:

1.15 (1) crisis grants to households who received a LIHEAP primary heat grant from federal
1.16 funds but did not receive the maximum crisis grant amount while federal funds allocated
1.17 for crisis grants were available;

1.18 (2) primary heat and crisis grants to eligible households who did not receive LIHEAP
1.19 primary heat and crisis grants from federal funds allocated for crisis grants;

1.20 (3) grants to support outreach; and

1.21 (4) administration of this section.

2.1 Subd. 3. **Eligibility.** (a) All Minnesota residents earning up to 60 percent of the state
2.2 median income are eligible for grants under this section.

2.3 (b) When making grants under this section, the commissioner must prioritize providing
2.4 energy assistance to a greater number of households, rather than to increase grant amounts
2.5 to households that already received LIHEAP during the current year.

2.6 (c) Funds may be used for emergency heating system repair or replacement.

2.7 (d) When available, federal LIHEAP funding must be used for all primary heat and crisis
2.8 grants to eligible households.

2.9 Subd. 4. **Application period.** The commissioner must accept grant applications for
2.10 supplemental energy assistance year-round.

2.11 Subd. 5. **Reporting.** (a) Beginning December 31, 2023, and annually thereafter until
2.12 December 31, 2029, the commissioner of commerce must publish a report regarding the
2.13 state supplemental energy assistance funding under this section for the previous program
2.14 year from October 1 to September 30. The report must include:

2.15 (1) number of households served;

2.16 (2) average household primary heat benefit;

2.17 (3) average household crisis benefit;

2.18 (4) of the households served, the:

2.19 (i) average income;

2.20 (ii) average utility bill and total energy costs;

2.21 (iii) income by percentage of poverty;

2.22 (iv) number of households that include a person over 60;

2.23 (v) number of households that include a disabled person;

2.24 (vi) number of households that include a child under six; and

2.25 (vii) number of households served by race or ethnicity; and

2.26 (5) for each household category in clause (4), provide as a statewide total the:

2.27 (i) average household primary heat benefit;

2.28 (ii) average household crisis benefit;

2.29 (iii) average income;

3.1 (iv) average utility bill and total energy costs; and

3.2 (v) income by percentage of poverty.

3.3 (b) The information under paragraph (a), clauses (1) to (4), must be reported on a
3.4 statewide and county-by-county basis.

3.5 (c) The commissioner must submit the report to the chairs and ranking minority members
3.6 of the legislative committees having jurisdiction over energy and make the report public on
3.7 the Department of Commerce website.

3.8 Subd. 6. Expiration. This section expires January 1, 2030.

3.9 **Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION; SUPPLEMENTAL ENERGY ASSISTANCE FUNDING.**

3.10 (a) \$100,000,000 in fiscal year 2024 is appropriated from the general fund to the
3.11 commissioner of commerce for deposit in the supplemental energy assistance fund account
3.12 in the special revenue fund under Minnesota Statutes, section 216C.391, subdivision 1. This
3.13 is a onetime appropriation and is available until June 30, 2029.

3.14 (b) Of the amount appropriated in paragraph (a):

3.15 (1) up to ten percent may be used to administer the supplemental program under
3.16 Minnesota Statutes, section 216C.391, including up to 2.5 percent for the Department of
3.17 Commerce. The remaining amount allocated under this clause may be used for administrative
3.18 costs incurred by service providers; and

3.19 (2) up to eight percent may be used for outreach and assistance to households in
3.20 completing grant applications under this section. Organizations that have the ability to
3.21 conduct outreach to underserved communities and populations must be prioritized for
3.22 outreach funding, and may include current service providers and other organizations.