

HCS HB 160 -- WATER AND SEWER CORPORATIONS

SPONSOR: Knight

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Utilities by a vote of 14 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 8 to 0.

This bill authorizes the Public Service Commission, during a general rate proceeding, to set a separate, lower fixed charge or customer charge for low-income customers of water corporations and sewer corporations. The aggregate impact of the low-income rate must be no more than one-half of one percent of the total revenue requirement allocated to the residential customer class. The commission must also require the water or sewer corporation to verify a customer's financial status using a third party or community agency.

This bill is similar SB 55 (2019).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that there are currently programs in place to help low-income customers with gas and electric utilities, but there is not a program to help water or sewer customers. By helping companies collect payments from those who currently can't pay their bills, it will help all customers because the "uncollectables" will not be passed on to other customers.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Knight; Consumers Council of Missouri; Empire Liberty; and Missouri American Water.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.