

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
OVERSIGHT DIVISION

FISCAL NOTE

L.R. No.: 2708H.01I
Bill No.: HB 1334
Subject: Social Services, Department of; Utilities; Elderly; Disabilities; Housing
Type: Original
Date: March 16, 2021

Bill Summary: This proposal modifies provisions relating to eligibility for Utilicare assistance.

FISCAL SUMMARY

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE FUND			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Total Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON OTHER STATE FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>Other</u> State Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Numbers within parentheses: () indicate costs or losses.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>All</u> Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Total Estimated Net Effect on FTE	0	0	0

- ☐ Estimated Net Effect (expenditures or reduced revenues) expected to exceed \$250,000 in any of the three fiscal years after implementation of the act or at full implementation of the act.
- ☐ Estimated Net Effect (savings or increased revenues) expected to exceed \$250,000 in any of the three fiscal years after implementation of the act or at full implementation of the act.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Local Government	\$0	\$0	\$0

FISCAL ANALYSIS

ASSUMPTION

Officials from the **Department of Social Services (DSS), Family Support Division (FSD)** state the Utilicare program is subject to appropriations and is not currently funded.

Oversight notes Utilicare is a state-funded program that provides financial assistance to elderly, disabled and other qualified individual households for the payment of charges for the primary or secondary heating or cooling source for the household. Some individuals qualify for assistance under Utilicare and the federally funded Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which is a block grant program. Past Energy Assistance core funding included Utilicare and LIHEAP funds. Because no funds are currently appropriated to the Utilicare program and because some eligibility criteria overlap, FSD is using LIHEAP as the basis for their calculations for fiscal note purposes.

FSD is not currently administering the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) with income eligibility requirements at the maximum level of 150% FPL allowable under current statute. Federal statute allows for the program to be administered with income eligibility guidelines of 150% FPL or 60% of the state median income. Sixty percent of the state median income would currently exceed 200% FPL.

This legislation would not change the current administration of the Energy Assistance program, therefore there is no fiscal impact. If the program were administered at the maximum income eligibility of 200% FPL, the fiscal impact would be up to \$128,829,120. FSD arrived at up to \$128,829,120 in the following manner:

FSD is unable to determine the number of households with household income between 151% FPL to 200% FPL. According the United States Census Bureau, there are currently 452,032 individuals over the age of 18 with income between 150% to 199% FPL. FSD used the average energy assistance (EA) benefit amount to determine the potential impact since the Utilicare program is not currently funded and current data is not available. In FY 20, the average EA benefit was \$285. Because the number of households that would become eligible if FSD administered the program with the maximum income eligibility of 200% FPL allowable based on this legislation, it is assumed the impact would be up to \$128,829,120 (452,032 * \$285).

Oversight does not have any information to the contrary. Therefore, Oversight will reflect a zero impact in the fiscal note for DSS.

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – State Government</u>	FY 2022 (10 Mo.)	FY 2023	FY 2024
	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – Local Government</u>	FY 2022 (10 Mo.)	FY 2023	FY 2024
	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>

FISCAL IMPACT – Small Business

No direct fiscal impact to small businesses would be expected as a result of this proposal.

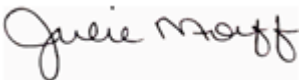
FISCAL DESCRIPTION

The proposed legislation appears to have no direct fiscal impact.


This legislation is not federally mandated, would not duplicate any other program and would not require additional capital improvements or rental space.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Department of Social Services



Julie Morff
Director
March 16, 2021



Ross Strobe
Assistant Director
March 16, 2021