

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1428

C 249 L 93
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Removing the expiration date and correcting references for the Washington telephone assistance program.

By House Committee on Energy & Utilities (originally sponsored by Representatives Grant, Casada, Finkbeiner, Long, King and Jacobsen).

House Committee on Energy & Utilities
Senate Committee on Energy & Utilities

Background: In 1987, the Legislature established a program to assist low-income persons in obtaining basic telephone services. The program, then known as the "Lifeline Assistance Program" and now known as the "Washington Telephone Assistance Program" (WTAP), is administered by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

WTAP provides low-income persons with a 50 percent discount on connection fees and waives deposit requirements. Under the program, WTAP participants are charged a discounted flat rate for basic telephone service.

In order to be eligible for assistance under WTAP, a person must be an adult recipient of programs that are administered by DSHS for the financially needy and that provide continuing financial or medical assistance, food stamps, or supportive services to persons in their homes.

WTAP is funded by an excise tax on all switched access lines and by funds available for this purpose from the federal government or other sources. There is a statutory ceiling on the excise tax of \$0.14 per month per line. The current rate, established by the Utilities and Transportation Commission, is \$0.13 per line per month.

The WTAP program expires on June 30, 1993, unless extended by the Legislature.

Summary: The Washington Telephone Assistance Program is extended until June 30, 1998.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	97	0	
Senate	46	1	(Senate amended)
House	97	0	(House concurred)

Effective: May 7, 1993