
HOUSE BILL 2656

State of Washington

56th Legislature

2000 Regular Session

By Representatives Kagi, Benson, Cody, Regala, Edmonds, Edwards, Schual-Berke, Murray, Kessler, Conway, Lovick and O'Brien

Read first time 01/18/2000. Referred to Committee on Technology, Telecommunications & Energy.

1 AN ACT Relating to addressing health problems that significantly
2 increase energy needs; adding a new section to chapter 82.16 RCW; and
3 creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds and declares that
6 patients with certain chronic debilitating medical conditions have a
7 critical need to live in high temperature environments in order to
8 sustain their functioning and prevent a worsening of health conditions
9 that are likely life-threatening. Their ability to maintain a
10 comfortable body temperature can directly affect the course of their
11 illnesses. Temperature-sensitive patients include those on life-
12 support equipment; or who are paraplegic or quadriplegic; with
13 scleroderma, compromised immune systems; or suffering from other life-
14 threatening illnesses, including spinal cord injuries, rheumatoid
15 arthritis and diabetes. With inadequate heating, a patient's internal
16 organs degenerate with diminished blood supply ultimately leading to
17 emergent and more costly health services such as transplants and
18 dialysis. The financial trauma of the onset or progression of these
19 serious illnesses, coupled with inordinate heating costs, may require

1 these patients to become dependent on the state for the costs of
2 meeting more serious and intractable conditions. With the hope of
3 preventing the onset of more debilitating conditions and avoiding
4 higher health costs associated with them, it is the intent of the
5 legislature to encourage power, light, and gas distribution businesses
6 in this state to offer discounts on heating costs to temperature-
7 sensitive patients by providing credits against the taxes imposed by
8 this chapter for customer payment reductions in accordance with the
9 provisions of this act.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 82.16 RCW
11 to read as follows:

12 (1) A light and power business or a gas distribution business may
13 take a credit against the tax imposed by this chapter for customer
14 payment reductions, subject to subsection (2) of this section.

15 (2) A customer must submit an application for a payment reduction
16 to the department. The application must contain a signed statement
17 from a licensed physician or osteopathic physician who certifies that
18 the patient is a temperature-sensitive person with a qualifying illness
19 or condition as provided under subsection (3)(b) of this section.
20 After reviewing the application, the department shall transmit an
21 approved application to the light and power and gas distribution
22 businesses currently servicing the customer. Upon receipt of an
23 approved application, a light and power business and gas distribution
24 business shall begin providing the customer with a payment reduction
25 and begin taking the credit authorized under subsection (1) of this
26 section.

27 (3) For the purposes of this section and unless the context clearly
28 requires otherwise, the following definitions apply:

29 (a) "Payment reduction" means a financial diminution in the amount
30 of money a customer must remit to a light and power business or gas
31 distribution business for services which qualify a light and power
32 business or gas distribution business for a tax credit authorized under
33 subsection (1) of this section. A payment reduction shall not exceed
34 fifty percent of the money owed to a light and power business or gas
35 distribution business for services.

36 (b) "Customer" means an individual that requires light and power
37 service or gas service and that:

38 (i) Depends on life-support equipment;

1 (ii) Has paraplegia or quadriplegia;
2 (iii) Has scleroderma;
3 (iv) Has a life-threatening illness; or
4 (v) Has a compromised immune system.
5 (4) Application for a payment reduction may only be made in the
6 form and manner prescribed by the department. The department may adopt
7 any rules necessary for the effective administration of this section.

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