

***Local Government & Housing
Committee***

HB 2096

Brief Description: *Authorizing water-sewer districts to engage in general fund-raising for programs for low-income customers.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Dunshee, Mulliken, Santos and Schual-Berke.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Authorizes a water-sewer district to engage in general fund-raising activities for the purpose of enhancing contributions to low-income utility assistance programs.*

Hearing Date: *2/26/01*

Staff: *Scott MacColl (786-7106).*

Background:

Water-sewer districts may include with its billing statements a request for voluntary contributions to assist low-income customers in paying their bills. Funds must be used solely to supplement low-income residential customers in paying their bills. All funds must be deposited with either the local agency that administers the federally funded energy assistance program in the district, or with a charitable organization within the district.

The local agency or charitable organization is responsible for determining who is qualified to receive funds, the amount of assistance provided, and for the disbursement of all assistance. Where possible, the district is to be paid through the assistance program on behalf of the customer. Funds available through this program don't reduce the amount of assistance available for customers through the federally funded energy assistance programs. The local agency or charitable organization is required to submit to the district a quarterly report regarding the program.

Contributions received under these programs implemented by a water-sewer district is not considered a commingling of funds.

Summary of Bill:

Water-Sewer districts are authorized to engage in fund raising activities to enhance contributions to programs that assist low-income utility customers in paying their bills.

There is no definition as to what constitutes 'fund raising activities' for water-sewer districts.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.