

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 6468

C 287 L 10
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Coordinating the weatherization and structural rehabilitation of residential structures.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Environment, Water & Energy (originally sponsored by Senators Kauffman, Rockefeller, Pridemore, Berkey and Kline).

Senate Committee on Environment, Water & Energy
House Committee on Local Government & Housing
House Committee on Capital Budget

Background: The Energy Matchmakers Program began in 1987 and was funded with federal court ordered settlements from oil overcharges that occurred during the 1980's. Since 1991 after the oil overcharge funds were depleted, the Legislature has provided, through capital funds, at least \$8 million per biennia to the Department of Commerce (department) for the Energy Matchmakers Program. The program provides matching funds on a dollar for dollar basis to local energy conservation programs to weatherize homes of low-income persons. The matching funds are usually provided by public and private utilities, rental property owners, and local governments. Since 1988 the Energy Matchmakers program has weatherized over 61,000 homes.

During the 2009 Legislative Session, the Legislature required the Energy Matchmakers Program to allocate funding for weatherization projects that: identify and correct health and safety problems for residents of low-income households; create family-wage jobs leading to careers in construction or the energy efficiency sectors; and leverage environmentally friendly sustainable technologies practices and designs. In addition, the funds are to be used for the preservation of homes occupied by low-income households and to support and advance sustainable technologies. Priority must be given to weatherization of homes occupied by low-income households with incomes at or below 125 percent of the federally established poverty level.

Summary: The Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Account is revised to the Low-Income Weatherization and Structural Rehabilitation Assistance Account. The department must prioritize weatherization and structural rehabilitation projects to facilitate the allocation of funding from federal energy efficiency programs such as the Weatherization Assistance Program, Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program, residential energy efficiency aspects of the State Energy Program, and the retrofit ramp-up program.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The department must prioritize allocation of funds from the Low-Income Weatherization and Structural Rehabilitation Assistance Account to projects that maximize energy efficiency and extend the usable life of a home through rehabilitation and repair activities and by installing energy efficiency measures, so that federal funding can be distributed expeditiously.

Service providers, not programs, that receive funding must report to the department at least quarterly or consistent with federal reporting timeframes, project costs, the number of homes repaired, rehabilitated, and weatherized.

Technical changes were made including deleting definitions that did not apply to the Energy Matchmaker program.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	0	
House	64	33	(House amended)
Senate	47	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 10, 2010