
HOUSE BILL 1981

State of Washington**57th Legislature****2001 Regular Session**

By Representatives Kagi, Benson, Poulsen, Cody, Reardon, Edmonds, Schual-Berke, Conway, Santos, Kenney, Lovick and Wood

Read first time 02/12/2001. Referred to Committee on Health Care.

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

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

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

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

1 (i) Has peripheral circulatory problems, including paraplegia,
2 quadriplegia, hemiplegia, diabetes, raynaud's disease or raynaud's
3 phenomenon, or multiple sclerosis;

4 (ii) Has a disease that affects the joints such as scleroderma,
5 rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, osteoarthritis; or

6 (iii) Requires regular use of life-support equipment.

7 (4) Application for a payment reduction may only be made in the
8 form and manner prescribed by the department of community, trade, and
9 economic development. The department may adopt any rules necessary for
10 the effective administration of this section.

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