
**Housing, Community Development &
Veterans Committee**

HB 2629

Brief Description: Waiving utility connection charges for certain properties.

Sponsors: Representatives Walen, Goodman, Springer, Macri, Slatter, Duerr, Kloba and Graham.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires electric, water, gas, and sewer utilities to waive connection charges for properties used by a nonprofit organization, local agency, or any other legal entity in providing emergency, transitional, or permanent supportive housing for homeless persons or victims of domestic violence who are homeless for personal safety reasons.

Hearing Date: 1/28/20

Staff: Cassie Jones (786-7303).

Background:

Cooperative Associations and Mutual Corporations.

Cooperative Association. Any number of people may join together for the creation of a cooperative association where members participate in the cooperative's business for the mutual benefit of all the members. A cooperative association may be formed to advance any lawful business, including any agriculture, dairy, mercantile, mining, manufacturing, or mechanical business.

Mutual Corporations. Corporations and businesses that operate on a nonprofit basis may organize for any lawful purpose including but not limited to mutual, social, cooperative, fraternal, beneficial, service, labor organization, and other purposes.

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.

Cooperative associations and mutual corporations may organize for the purpose of providing utilities. Cooperatives organized for providing electricity are known and referred to as "retail electric cooperatives."

Municipal Utilities.

Cities and towns may provide for the sewerage, drainage, and water supply of the city or town. They may also establish, construct, and maintain water supply systems and systems of sewers and drains within or without their corporate limits. Counties may establish, operate, finance, and maintain a system or systems of water supply, sewer systems, and stormwater systems within all or a portion of the county. A county also may, as part of a system of sewerage, exercise powers pertaining to stormwater, flood control, pollution prevention, and drainage services and activities.

Public Utility Districts.

A public utility district is a type of special purpose district authorized for the purpose of generating and distributing electricity, providing water and sewer services, and providing telecommunications services.

Summary of Bill:

The following providers of utilities must waive connection charges for properties used by a nonprofit organization, local agency, or any other legal entity that provides emergency, transitional, or permanent supportive housing for homeless persons or victims of domestic violence who are homeless for personal safety reasons:

- cooperatives organized for the purpose of providing electric service;
- mutual corporations organized for the purpose of providing utility service;
- municipal and county utilities;
- public utility districts; and
- gas, electrical, and water companies.

"Domestic violence" means the infliction or threat of physical harm against an intimate partner, and includes physical, sexual, and psychological abuse against the partner, and is a part of a pattern of assaultive, coercive, and controlling behaviors directed at achieving compliance from or control over that intimate partner.

"Homeless person" means an individual living outside or in a building not meant for human habitation or which they have no legal right to occupy, in an emergency shelter, or in a temporary housing program which may include a transitional and supportive housing program if habitation time limits exist.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.