

HB 3792 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Commerce and Consumer Protection

Action Date: 04/08/25

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 6-3-1-0

Yeas: 6 - Chaichi, Chotzen, Gomberg, Neron, Sosa, Walters

Nays: 3 - Osborne, Reschke, Wallan

Exc: 1 - Cate

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Andrew Hendrie, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/27, 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure increases the amount required to be collected by electric companies from at least \$20 million to at least \$40 million to be placed into the Housing and Community Services Department Low Income Electric Bill Payment Assistance Fund. The measure requires the Public Utility Commission to reassess this figure every two years and may increase the amount and the rates to be charged by each electric company. It requires the commission to report to the Legislative Assembly within 30 days if the amount is increased by more than 2.5 percent. The measure increases the cap that an electric company may collect from a single customer site from \$500 to \$1,000 per month.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The cap on per site customer payments to the Housing and Community Services Department Low Income Electric Bill Payment Assistance Fund
- Rising utility costs
- Alternative approaches to funding the Housing and Community Services Department Low Income Electric Bill Payment Assistance Fund
- The quality of housing

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

The Public Utility Commission (PUC) is responsible for rate regulation of Oregon's investor-owned electric utilities, natural gas utilities, telephone service providers (landline only), as well as select water companies. The PUC also enforces electric and natural gas safety standards and handles utility-related dispute resolution on behalf of Oregon residents.

The Housing and Community Services Department Low-Income Electric Bill Payment Assistance Fund is established in the State Treasury, separate and distinct from the General Fund. Interest earned by the Fund is credited to the fund and moneys in the fund are continuously appropriated to the Department for providing low-income electric bill payment and crisis assistance.