

Enrolled House Bill 3792

Sponsored by Representative ANDERSEN; Representatives CHOTZEN, GAMBA, GOMBERG, Senators LIEBER, MEEK, REYNOLDS, SOLLMAN

CHAPTER

AN ACT

Relating to consumer protection for utility ratepayers; creating new provisions; and amending ORS 757.698.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. ORS 757.698 is amended to read:

757.698. (1) An electric company, as defined in ORS 757.600, or Oregon Community Power shall collect funds for low-income electric bill payment and crisis assistance in an amount determined by the Public Utility Commission. The commission shall:

(a) Establish the amount to be collected and rates to be charged by each electric company from its customers, including customers receiving electricity from other sources, such that the forecasted collection by all electric companies in a calendar year is at least [~~\$20~~] **\$40** million.

(b) **Reassess every two years the level of community need for low-income electric bill payment and crisis assistance. Based on the commission's findings and changes to electricity rates during the prior two years, the commission may increase the amount to be collected and the rates to be charged by each electric company from its customers. If the commission decides to increase the amount to be collected by more than 2.5 percent, the commission shall report within 30 days from the date of the commission's decision to the Legislative Assembly. The report must include information on the commission's findings, the amount of the increase and the amount to be collected. The report may include recommendations to change the limit on the amount that may be charged per customer site under paragraph (d) of this subsection.**

~~[(b)]~~ (c) Adjust the rates if forecasted collections or actual collections are less than [~~\$20~~] **\$40** million in any calendar year but shall not otherwise adjust the rates once set, **except as otherwise provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection.**

~~[(c)]~~ (d) Ensure that no customer pays more than [~~\$500~~] **\$1,000** per month per customer site for low-income electric bill payment and crisis assistance.

(2) Funds collected by an electric company or Oregon Community Power under this section must be:

(a) Paid into the Housing and Community Services Department Low-Income Electric Bill Payment Assistance Fund established by ORS 456.587 (2);

(b) Used by the Housing and Community Services Department solely for purposes related to low-income electric bill payment and crisis assistance and for the Housing and Community Services Department's cost of administering this section; and

(c) Expended in the service area of the electric company or Oregon Community Power from which the funds are collected.

(3) The Housing and Community Services Department shall determine the manner in which funds collected under this section are allocated by the department to energy assistance program providers for the purpose of providing low-income electric bill payment and crisis assistance. However, the department shall:

(a) In consultation with electric companies, investigate and may implement alternative delivery models to effectively reduce service disconnections and related costs to customers and electric companies; and

(b) Direct priority assistance to low-income customers who are in danger of having their electricity service disconnected.

(4) The department shall maintain records and provide those records upon request to an electric company, Oregon Community Power and the Citizens' Utility Board established under ORS chapter 774 on a quarterly basis. Records maintained must include the numbers of low-income customers served, the average amounts paid and the type of assistance provided. Electric companies and Oregon Community Power shall, if requested, provide the department with aggregate data relating to low-income customers served on a quarterly basis to support program development.

(5) Interest on moneys deposited in the Housing and Community Services Department Low-Income Electric Bill Payment Assistance Fund established by ORS 456.587 (2) may be used to provide bill payment and crisis assistance to customers whose primary source of heat is not electricity.

(6) Notwithstanding ORS 757.310, the commission may allow an electric company or Oregon Community Power to provide reduced rates or other bill payment or crisis assistance or low-income program assistance to a low-income household eligible for assistance under the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981, as amended and in effect on July 23, 1999.

SECTION 2. Notwithstanding any other law limiting expenditures, the limitation on expenditures established by section 2 (1), chapter ____, Oregon Laws 2025 (Enrolled House Bill 5011), for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, as the maximum limit for payment of expenses from fees, moneys or other revenues, including Miscellaneous Receipts and federal funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for contract services, but excluding lottery funds and federal funds not described in this section, collected or received by the Housing and Community Services Department, for Housing Stabilization Programs, is increased by \$20,000,000, for expenditures from the Low-Income Electric Bill Payment Assistance Fund established by ORS 456.587.

Passed by House June 24, 2025

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Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

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Julie Fahey, Speaker of House

Passed by Senate June 26, 2025

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Rob Wagner, President of Senate

Received by Governor:

.....M.,....., 2025

Approved:

.....M.,....., 2025

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Tina Kotek, Governor

Filed in Office of Secretary of State:

.....M.,....., 2025

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Tobias Read, Secretary of State