

HB 2252 also expands the Oregon Telephone Assistance Program to Medicaid-eligible subscribers in long-term care facilities whose incomes exceed 135% of the federal poverty level. The program assists low-income individuals with the cost of telephone service, and is funded with a surcharge on telephone subscribers. The PUC notes that the income of Medicaid-covered subscribers in long-term care facilities is used to pay basic living expenses, with only a small stipend available for other essentials such as clothing and toiletries. This change ensures that these persons have access to telephone services. The PUC estimates that the change would add 980 individuals to the program at a biennial cost of \$86,048, which will be funded through an increase in the surcharge.