

DRAFT

SUMMARY

Establishes Public Drinking Water and Sewer Ratepayer Assistance Fund. Directs Housing and Community Services Department to provide grants from moneys in fund to qualified organizations to distribute water and sewer bill payment assistance to low-income residential households.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1 Relating to water utility ratepayer assistance.

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

3 **SECTION 1. (1) The Public Drinking Water and Sewer Ratepayer**
4 **Assistance Fund is established in the State Treasury, separate and**
5 **distinct from the General Fund. The Public Drinking Water and Sewer**
6 **Ratepayer Assistance Fund shall consist of all moneys placed in the**
7 **fund as provided by law and any gifts, grants, donations, endowments**
8 **or bequests from any public or private source.**

9 (2) Moneys in the fund are continuously appropriated the Housing
10 and Community Services Department for the purposes set forth in
11 subsection (3) of this section.

12 (3) The department shall provide grants from moneys deposited in
13 the fund to qualified organizations to distribute water and sewer bill
14 payment assistance to low-income residential households.

15 (4) Qualified organizations for receiving grants under this section
16 shall include, but need not be limited to:

17 (a) Nonprofit community-based organizations, including but not
18 limited to housing authorities and community action agencies; and

19 (b) Public utilities providing domestic water or sewer service.
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1 **(5) The department shall adopt rules necessary for the adminis-**
2 **tration and implementation of subsections (3) and (4) of this section.**
3 **In adopting rules, the department shall consider other utility bill**
4 **payment or crisis assistance and low-income assistance programs ad-**
5 **ministered by the department, including but not limited to the Low**
6 **Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.).**

7 **SECTION 2.** **In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropri-**
8 **ation, there is appropriated to the Housing and Community Services**
9 **Department, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, out of the Gen-**
10 **eral Fund, the amount of \$15,000,000, for deposit in the Public Drinking**
11 **Water and Sewer Ratepayer Assistance Fund established under section**
12 **1 of this 2023 Act.**

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