

House Bill 3125

Sponsored by COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, LAND USE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND WATER (at the request of Representative Ken Helm)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

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
2 Relating to water utility ratepayer assistance.

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

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

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

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

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

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

18 (b) Public utilities providing domestic water or sewer service.

19 (5) The department shall adopt rules necessary for the administration and implementa-
20 tion of subsections (3) and (4) of this section. In adopting rules, the department shall con-
21 sider other utility bill payment or crisis assistance and low-income assistance programs
22 administered by the department, including but not limited to the Low Income Home Energy
23 Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8621 et seq.).

24 **SECTION 2. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-**
25 **ated to the Housing and Community Services Department, for the biennium beginning July**
26 **1, 2023, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$15,000,000, for deposit in the Public Drinking**
27 **Water and Sewer Ratepayer Assistance Fund established under section 1 of this 2023 Act.**

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NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.