

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Provide Funding for the Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program

Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

Whereas, projected funding of the Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program is not expected to increase sufficiently to offset the increased cost of heating fuel; and

Whereas, the average benefit under the program will be inadequate to fill a recipient's fuel tank even one time; and

Whereas, in an average winter a fuel tank would need to be filled 3 to 5 times during the heating season; and

Whereas, it is essential to the health and safety of the elderly, the disabled and the most vulnerable in our State that the State provide funds to help fill the gap between the need and the available federal resources; and

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. Payments or assistance not considered income or resources for any purpose under state law. Notwithstanding any other provision of law unless enacted in express limitation of this section, the amount of any home energy assistance payments or allowances provided directly to, or indirectly for the benefit of, an eligible household under this Act may not be considered income or resources of that household or any member of that household for any purpose under any state law, including any law relating to taxation, food stamps, public assistance or welfare programs.

Sec. 2. Use of funds; limitation. The Maine State Housing Authority shall expend funds provided pursuant to section 3 exclusively for fuel purchases and may not use those funds to support administrative expenses.

Sec. 3. Appropriations and allocations. The following appropriations and allocations are made.

MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Low-income Home Energy Assistance - MSHA 0708

Initiative: Provides funding for the Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program.

HP0663, LD 874, item 1, 123rd Maine State Legislature
An Act To Provide Funding for the Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program

GENERAL FUND	2007-08	2008-09
All Other	\$5,000,000	\$0
GENERAL FUND TOTAL	\$5,000,000	\$0

Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this Act takes effect when approved.

SUMMARY

This bill provides \$5,000,000 to the Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program and specifies that the funds may be used only for fuel purchases.