
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENERGY ASSISTANCE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii residents pay
2 the most for electricity of any state in the nation. An average
3 Hawaii electricity bill totals \$213 each month. The average
4 rate of electricity, 39.62 cents per kWh, is more than twice the
5 national average. Federal programs such as the Low-Income Home
6 Energy Assistance Program favor heat expenses, leaving Hawaii
7 with less benefits than other states. The purpose this Act is
8 to implement a Hawaii Home Energy Assistance Program.

9 SECTION 2. Chapter 346, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
10 amended by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately
11 designated and to read as follows:

12 "S346- Hawaii home energy assistance program;
13 established. (a) There is established within the department
14 the Hawaii home energy assistance program. The program shall
15 assist eligible households with payment of costs associated with
16 meeting an eligible household's home energy needs by providing a
17 stipend of up to \$50 per month, not to exceed \$600 per year.



1 The amount of the stipend shall correlate to the income-based
2 eligibility determinations established by the department
3 pursuant to subsection (d).

4 (b) Any person who is in need of public assistance may
5 submit an application in a form prescribed by the department
6 that includes, at a minimum, documentation to prove that the
7 person:

8 (1) Is a resident of the State;
9 (2) Has an active energy utility account in the State; and
10 (3) Satisfies the income limit and all other eligibility
11 standards established by the department pursuant to
12 subsection (d).

13 (c) The public utilities commission public benefits fee
14 administrator, in consultation with the department, shall
15 provide information and technical assistance about available
16 energy efficiency programs to recipients, including an energy
17 audit at the request of a recipient, and assist recipients with
18 implementation of energy efficiency improvements in accordance
19 with section 269-123(b).



1 (d) The department shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter
2 91 for purposes of this section relating to eligibility,
3 assistance rates, and the application process."

4 SECTION 3. Section 269-123, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended by amending subsection (b) to read as follows:

6 "(b) The public benefits fee administrator's duties and
7 responsibilities shall be established by the public utilities
8 commission by rule or order, and may include:

9 (1) Identifying, developing, administering, promoting,
10 implementing, and evaluating programs, methods, and
11 technologies that support energy-efficiency and
12 demand-side management programs;

13 (2) Encouraging the continuance or improvement of
14 efficiencies made in the production, delivery, and use
15 of energy-efficiency and demand-side management
16 programs and services;

17 (3) Using the energy-efficiency expertise and capabilities
18 that have developed or may develop in the State and
19 consulting with state agency experts;



- (4) Promoting program initiatives, incentives, and market strategies that address the needs of persons facing the most significant barriers to participation;
- (5) Promoting coordinated program delivery, including coordination with electric public utilities regarding the delivery of low-income home energy assistance, other demand-side management or energy-efficiency programs, and any utility programs;
- (6) Consideration of innovative approaches to delivering demand-side management and energy-efficiency services, including strategies to encourage third-party financing and customer contributions to the cost of demand-side management and energy-efficiency services;
- (7) Submitting, to the public utilities commission for review and approval, a multi-year budget and planning cycle that promotes program improvement, program stability, and maturation of programs and delivery resources; [and]
- (8) Educating and training appliance manufacturers, distributors, and retailers of appliances covered under part VI of chapter 196 about the appliance



1 efficiency standards established under that part to
2 improve compliance[–]; and

3 (9) Providing information and technical assistance about
4 available energy efficiency programs to recipients of
5 the Hawaii home energy assistance program, including
6 an energy audit if requested by the recipient, and
7 assisting the recipients with implementation of energy
8 efficiency improvements."

9 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
11 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 to:

12 (1) Establish full-time equivalent (FTE) position
13 and full-time equivalent (FTE) temporary
14 positions;

15 (2) Make system modifications; and

16 (3) Contract services as may be necessary,

17 for the purposes of implementing the Hawaii home energy
18 assistance program established pursuant to section 2 of this
19 Act.

20 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
21 of human services for the purposes of this Act.



1 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
2 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

3 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

4

INTRODUCED BY: 

JAN 26 2026



H.B. NO. 2175

Report Title:

DHS; PUC; Hawaii Home Energy Assistance Program; Positions; Appropriation

Description:

Establishes the Hawaii Home Energy Assistance Program within the Department of Human Services to assist eligible households in paying their energy bills. Requires the Public Utilities Commission Public Benefits Fee Administrator to provide certain information and assistance to recipients of the program. Establishes positions. Appropriates funds.

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