
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO ENERGY EQUITY.

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

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawai'i's electricity
2 costs create disproportionately high energy burdens on low-
3 income households and medically fragile individuals. High
4 electricity burden is associated with adverse health outcomes,
5 increased hardship for seniors and caregivers, barriers to
6 distributed energy resource adoption, and increased risk of
7 disconnection during extreme heat and climate-driven
8 emergencies.

9 The legislature further finds that allowing the public
10 utilities commission to develop standards and programs that
11 reduce energy burdens, advance public health, and align with the
12 performance-based regulation framework would improve affordable
13 access to essential electricity for all residents and strengthen
14 protections for households with medically essential electricity
15 needs.

16 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to allow the public
17 utilities commission to establish a lifeline baseline



1 performance standard and medically essential needs energy
2 program based on proposals from electric utilities.

3 SECTION 2. Chapter 269, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately
5 designated and to read as follows:

6 "§269- Lifeline baseline performance standard;
7 medically essential needs energy program. (a) The public
8 utilities commission may establish a lifeline baseline
9 performance standard and medically essential needs energy
10 program based on electric utility proposals, while considering
11 the following objectives:

- 12 (1) Addressing affordability for essential household
13 electricity use;
14 (2) Addressing energy burdens for low-income and medically
15 fragile households;
16 (3) Supporting medically necessary electricity
17 consumption;
18 (4) Promoting resilience during outages and service
19 disruptions; and
20 (5) Supporting energy equity and climate resilience
21 objectives.



1 (b) In response to electric utility proposals submitted
 2 pursuant to subsection (a), the public utilities commission may
 3 establish a lifeline baseline performance standard that reflects
 4 the monthly electricity consumption necessary to meet essential
 5 household needs, including considerations for:

- 6 (1) Household size and multigenerational residence;
- 7 (2) Climate zone, island-specific heat risk, and extreme
 8 temperature trends; and
- 9 (3) Household medical and health-related electricity
 10 needs.

11 (c) In response to electric utility proposals submitted
 12 pursuant to subsection (a), the public utilities commission may
 13 establish a medically essential needs energy program to protect
 14 households with medically essential electricity requirements.

15 The program may include:

- 16 (1) Providing for an enhanced baseline allowance at the
 17 lifeline rate for certified medical need;
- 18 (2) Allowing for certification by licensed health care
 19 providers, including via telehealth;



- 1 (3) Prohibiting disconnection of certified households
2 during conditions such as heat advisories, grid
3 reliability disruptions, and health care emergencies;
- 4 (4) Ensuring that participation does not affect
5 eligibility for any other assistance or energy
6 customer program; and
- 7 (5) Incentivizing distributed energy resource adoption to
8 address reliability and affordability concerns.
- 9 (d) If a lifeline baseline performance standard or
10 medically essential needs program is proposed or established,
11 the public utilities commission and electric utilities shall
12 submit a report of their findings and recommendations, including
13 any proposed legislation, to the legislature no later than
14 twenty days prior to the convening of each regular session. The
15 report shall include:
- 16 (1) Lifeline and medical program enrollment;
17 (2) Disconnection notices and completed disconnections,
18 disaggregated by island and zip code;
19 (3) Household electricity burden by income decile;
20 (4) Access to and enrollment in distributed energy
21 resource programs; and



1 (5) Heat-risk and emergency event data affecting household
2 energy stability."

3 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

4 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

PUC; Lifeline Baseline Performance Standard; Medically Essential Needs Energy Program; Electric Utilities

Description:

Allows the Public Utilities Commission to establish a lifeline baseline performance standard and medically essential needs energy program based on proposals from electric utilities. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

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