

SENATE, No. 3601

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED APRIL 19, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH P. CRYAN

District 20 (Union)

SYNOPSIS

Requires allocation of federal funds for certain essential service customer bill payment assistance; makes an appropriation.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ACT** concerning the allocation of federal funding from the
2 “American Rescue Plan Act of 2021” and other federal statutes
3 authorizing funding for coronavirus relief and making an
4 appropriation.
5

6 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
7 *of New Jersey:*
8

9 1. a. There is appropriated from the funds provided to the State
10 by the federal government under the “American Rescue Plan Act of
11 2021,” Pub. L. 117-2, to the Department of Community Affairs in a
12 sum to be determined by the department, for use by the department
13 to provide, consistent with federal law, bill payment assistance to
14 qualifying residential electric, heating, water, wastewater, Internet,
15 and voice telecommunications service customers throughout the
16 State who, due to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic,
17 have accrued overdue bills for these services. If the sum determined
18 by the department is not available through the “American Rescue
19 Plan Act of 2021,” Pub. L. 117-2, then the remainder of this amount
20 shall be appropriated from other sources of federal funding
21 authorized for coronavirus relief for this purpose as federal funding
22 becomes available. If federal funding is not available to satisfy the
23 full amount of this appropriation, then the Commissioner of
24 Community Affairs may notify the State Treasurer and the Joint
25 Budget Oversight Committee of the Legislature of this deficiency
26 and may request that the Legislature appropriate a portion of the
27 remainder from the General Fund, or other available State funding
28 sources, for the purposes of providing electric, heating, water,
29 wastewater, Internet, and voice telecommunications service bill
30 payment assistance to qualifying residential customers throughout
31 the State who, due to the negative impacts of the COVID-19
32 pandemic, have accrued overdue bills for payment of these services.

33 b. The department shall adopt rules and regulations pursuant to
34 the “Administrative Procedure Act,” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1
35 et seq.), to effectuate the purposes of this act and shall promulgate
36 rules and regulations establishing terms and conditions concerning
37 which residential customers qualify for bill payment assistance and
38 how much assistance each qualifying residential customer may
39 receive under this section.
40

41 2. This act shall take effect immediately.
42
43

44 STATEMENT

45

46 The bill appropriates an amount to be determined by the
47 Department of Community Affairs (DCA) from the funds provided
48 to the State by the federal government under the “American Rescue

1 Plan Act of 2021,” (the act) to provide bill payment assistance to
2 certain residential electric, heating, water, wastewater, Internet, and
3 voice telecommunications customers throughout the State due to the
4 negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the event that the
5 determined amount is not available through the bill, then the
6 remainder would be appropriated from other federal funding
7 available for coronavirus relief as that funding becomes available. If
8 federal funding is not available to satisfy the full amount of this
9 appropriation, then the bill would authorize DCA to request that a
10 portion of the remainder be appropriated from State funding
11 sources.