

Legislative Analysis



BAN GAS OR ELECTRIC SERVICE SHUTOFF FOR PERSONS WITH SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Mitchell Bean, Director
Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 5325 (Proposed Substitute H-2)

Sponsor: Rep. Bettie Cook Scott

Committee: Energy and Technology

Complete to 3-11-08

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5325 (Proposed Substitute H-2)

The bill would amend the Public Service Commission law (MCL 460.9d) to allow a gas or electric service customer with a documented "serious medical condition" requiring gas or electric service (or whose household includes a person with a serious medical condition) to apply for and receive up to 21 days' protection from gas or electricity shutoff, with possible additional extensions.

Ban on shut-off. An electric or gas service provider could not discontinue service to a qualifying customer with a serious medical condition (or whose household includes a person with a serious medical condition). Upon application, a qualifying customer would have to receive shut off protection for up to 21 days and could apply for one or more additional extensions.

Shut-off protection would not stop additional amounts owing from accruing. The customer would continue to be obligated to pay for services received during the period of shut-off protection, unless waived by the provider, but would *not* be responsible for late fees.

Procedures. Once a provider received an application from a qualifying customer, the service provider would have to do the following:

- Establish a repayment plan requiring minimum monthly payments that would allow the customer to pay past due amounts over a reasonable period of time.
- Provide information about governmental, service provider, and other assistance programs.
- Provide "access to existing information" about ways to minimize or conserve energy usage.

Definition of "qualifying customer." Under the bill, a "qualifying customer" would mean a customer or a member of the customer's household with a serious medical condition that requires electric or gas service and who provides verification of his or her condition to the provider.

MCL 4609d

FISCAL IMPACT:

A fiscal analysis is in process.

Legislative Analyst: Shannan Kane
Fiscal Analyst: Mark Wolf

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