

ASSEMBLY, No. 5875

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 14, 2021

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman HERB CONAWAY, JR.

District 7 (Burlington)

Assemblyman JOHN ARMATO

District 2 (Atlantic)

Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Zwicker, Rooney and Assemblywoman Dunn

SYNOPSIS

Requires certain public utilities to publicize information concerning bill payment assistance programs.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/24/2021)

1 AN ACT requiring electric, gas, sewer, and water public utilities to
2 establish public information campaigns concerning available bill
3 payment assistance programs.

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

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8 1. a. Within 30 days of the effective date of this act, every
9 electric, gas, sewer, and water public utility, as defined in R.S.48:2-
10 13, shall establish a public awareness campaign to inform its
11 customers about the availability of bill payment assistance
12 programs for the service provided by that public utility. The public
13 awareness campaign shall include, at a minimum, a list of bill
14 payment assistance programs that may be available to its customers,
15 information concerning the general application process and who
16 may qualify for assistance under each program, and information on
17 the entity a potentially qualified customer can contact to receive
18 further information on an assistance program.

19 b. Every electric, gas, sewer, and water public utility shall, at a
20 minimum:

21 (1) provide for the development of printed educational materials
22 and public service announcements in English and Spanish; and

23 (2) disseminate information for distribution to its customers
24 through a variety of entities located within the service territory of
25 the public utility, including, but not limited to, county offices,
26 public libraries, senior citizen centers, community-based outreach
27 organizations, and local electronic media, including public service
28 announcements broadcast by local electronic media, notices on any
29 social media of the utilities, and on the official Internet websites of
30 the Board of Public Utilities and each electric, gas, sewer, and water
31 public utility.

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33 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire 180
34 days following the expiration of Executive Order No. 229 of 2021.

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STATEMENT

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39 This bill requires every electric, gas, sewer, and water public
40 utility (utility) to establish a public awareness campaign to inform
41 its customers about the availability of bill payment assistance
42 programs for service provided by that utility. The public awareness
43 campaign is to include, at a minimum, a list of bill payment
44 assistance programs that may be available to its customers,
45 information concerning the general application process and who
46 may qualify for assistance under each program, and information on
47 the entity a potentially qualified customer can contact to receive
48 further information on an assistance program.

A5875 CONAWAY, ARMATO

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1 As part of the campaign, a utility is required to provide for the
2 development of printed educational materials and public service
3 announcements in both English and Spanish, and to disseminate
4 information for distribution to its customers, through a variety of
5 entities and mediums as provided in the bill.