

1 AN ACT in relation to government assistance.

2 Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
3 represented in the General Assembly:

4 Section 5. The Energy Assistance Act of 1989 is amended
5 by changing Section 6 as follows:

6 (305 ILCS 20/6) (from Ch. 111 2/3, par. 1406)

7 Sec. 6. Eligibility, Conditions of Participation, and
8 Energy Assistance.

9 (a) Any person who is a resident of the State of
10 Illinois and either (i) has been determined eligible for a
11 grant or pharmaceutical assistance under the Senior Citizens
12 and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief and Pharmaceutical
13 Assistance Act or (ii) has an annual household income of less
14 than \$40,000 and either is 65 years of age or older or is a
15 disabled person as defined in that Act whose household income
16 is not greater than an amount determined annually by the
17 Department, in consultation with the Policy Advisory Council,
18 may apply for assistance pursuant to this Act in accordance
19 with regulations promulgated by the Department. The
20 Department shall ensure that persons who have been determined
21 eligible for a grant or pharmaceutical assistance under the
22 Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons Property Tax Relief and
23 Pharmaceutical Assistance Act are accorded automatic
24 eligibility for and receipt of assistance under this Act
25 without having to file a separate application for that
26 assistance. In setting the annual eligibility level, the
27 Department shall consider the amount of available funding and
28 may not set a limit higher than 150% of the federal nonfarm
29 poverty level as established by the federal Office of
30 Management and Budget.

31 (b) Applicants who qualify for assistance pursuant to

1 subsection (a) of this Section shall, subject to
2 appropriation from the General Assembly and subject to
3 availability of funds to the Department, receive energy
4 assistance as provided by this Act. The Department, upon
5 receipt of monies authorized pursuant to this Act for energy
6 assistance, shall commit funds for each qualified applicant
7 in an amount determined by the Department. In determining
8 the amounts of assistance to be provided to or on behalf of a
9 qualified applicant, the Department shall ensure that the
10 highest amounts of assistance go to households with the
11 greatest energy costs in relation to household income. The
12 Department shall include factors such as energy costs,
13 household size, household income, and region of the State
14 when determining individual household benefits. In setting
15 assistance levels, the Department shall attempt to provide
16 assistance to approximately the same number of households who
17 participated in the 1991 Residential Energy Assistance
18 Partnership Program. Such assistance levels shall be
19 adjusted annually on the basis of funding availability. In
20 promulgating rules for the administration of this Section the
21 Department shall assure that a minimum of 1/3 of funds
22 available for benefits to eligible households are made
23 available to households who are eligible for public
24 assistance and that elderly and disabled households are
25 offered a one-month application period.

26 (c) If the applicant is not a customer of an energy
27 provider for winter energy services or an applicant for such
28 service, such applicant shall receive a direct energy
29 assistance payment in an amount established by the Department
30 for all such applicants under this Act; provided, however,
31 that such an applicant must have rental expenses for housing
32 greater than 30% of household income.

33 (d) If the applicant is a customer of an energy
34 provider, such applicant shall receive energy assistance in

1 an amount established by the Department for all such
2 applicants under this Act, such amount to be paid by the
3 Department to the energy provider supplying winter energy
4 service to such applicant. Such applicant shall:

5 (i) make all reasonable efforts to apply to any
6 other appropriate source of public energy assistance; and

7 (ii) sign a waiver permitting the Department to
8 receive income information from any public or private
9 agency providing income or energy assistance and from any
10 employer, whether public or private.

11 (e) Any qualified applicant pursuant to this Section may
12 receive or have paid on such applicant's behalf an emergency
13 assistance payment to enable such applicant to obtain access
14 to winter energy services. Any such payments shall be made
15 in accordance with regulations of the Department.

16 (Source: P.A. 91-936, eff. 1-10-01.)

17 Section 10. The Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons
18 Property Tax Relief and Pharmaceutical Assistance Act is
19 amended by adding Section 4.5 as follows:

20 (320 ILCS 25/4.5 new)

21 Sec. 4.5. Energy assistance. A person who is determined
22 eligible for a grant or pharmaceutical assistance under this
23 Act is also eligible for assistance under the Energy
24 Assistance Act of 1999. The Department of Revenue shall
25 supply the Department of Commerce and Community Affairs with
26 a list of all persons determined eligible for a grant or
27 pharmaceutical assistance under this Act.

28 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
29 becoming law.