



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 225**

February Session, 2010

Substitute House Bill No. 5216

*House of Representatives, March 31, 2010*

The Committee on Energy and Technology reported through REP. NARDELLO of the 89th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY TERMINATION FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH A MEMBER LESS THAN TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS OLD.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section 16-262c of the  
2 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
3 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2010*):

4 (b) (1) From November first to May first, inclusive, no electric or  
5 electric distribution company, as defined in section 16-1, no electric  
6 supplier and no municipal utility furnishing electricity shall terminate  
7 or refuse to reinstate residential electric service in hardship cases  
8 where the customer lacks the financial resources to pay his or her  
9 entire account. From November first to May first, inclusive, no gas  
10 company and no municipal utility furnishing gas shall terminate or  
11 refuse to reinstate residential gas service in hardship cases where the  
12 customer uses such gas for heat and lacks the financial resources to  
13 pay his or her entire account, except a gas company that, between May

14 second and October thirty-first, terminated gas service to a residential  
 15 customer who uses gas for heat and who, during the previous period  
 16 of November first to May first, had gas service maintained because of  
 17 hardship status, may refuse to reinstate the gas service from November  
 18 first to May first, inclusive, only if the customer has failed to pay, since  
 19 the preceding November first, the lesser of: (A) Twenty per cent of the  
 20 outstanding principal balance owed the gas company as of the date of  
 21 termination, (B) one hundred dollars, or (C) the minimum payments  
 22 due under the customer's amortization agreement. Notwithstanding  
 23 any other provision of the general statutes to the contrary, no electric,  
 24 electric distribution or gas company, no electric supplier and no  
 25 municipal utility furnishing electricity or gas shall terminate or refuse  
 26 to reinstate residential electric or gas service where the customer lacks  
 27 the financial resources to pay his or her entire account and for which  
 28 customer or a member of the customer's household the termination or  
 29 failure to reinstate such service would create a life-threatening  
 30 situation. Notwithstanding any other provision of the general statutes,  
 31 from October first until June first, no electric, electric distribution or  
 32 gas company, no electric supplier and no municipal utility furnishing  
 33 electricity or gas shall terminate or refuse to reinstate residential  
 34 electric or gas service where the customer lacks the financial resources  
 35 to pay his or her entire account and a child not more than twenty-four  
 36 months old resides in the customer's household and such customer is a  
 37 hardship case.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2010	16-262c(b)(1)

**ET**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 11 \$	FY 12 \$
All	All Funds - Cost	None	Potential, less than 50,000

**Municipal Impact:**

Municipalities	Effect	FY 11 \$	FY 12 \$
All Municipalities	STATE MANDATE - Cost	None	Potential, less than 50,000

**Explanation**

The bill would result in an estimated cost of less than \$50,000 for the state and municipalities combined. By lengthening the period of time during which certain utility customers may not have their service disconnected, the bill would increase the overall statewide cost of providing electricity and natural gas. There would be no cost to ratepayers, including the state and municipalities, until the Department of Public Utility Control revises the utility rates to incorporate the bill's costs.

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 5216*****AN ACT CONCERNING UTILITY TERMINATION FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH A MEMBER LESS THAN TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS OLD.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill extends the period during which electric and gas utilities may not terminate or refuse to reinstate residential electric service for certain households with children up to 24-months old. Under current law, this provision applies from November 1 to May 1 for hardship case customers who cannot pay their entire bill. The bill extends this period to October 1 to June 1 for such customers whose households include a child up to 24-months old.

By law, hardship customers include those (1) receiving state or federal public assistance; (2) whose only financial support is Social Security, Veterans' Administration, or unemployment compensation benefits; (3) who are unemployed and head of a household whose income is less than three times the federal poverty level; (4) who are seriously ill or have a household member who is seriously ill; (5) whose income falls below 125% of the federal poverty level; and (6) whose circumstances threaten to deprive them their dependent children of food and the necessities of life if they are required to pay a delinquent bill.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2010

**BACKGROUND*****Related Bill***

SB 182, favorably reported by the Energy and Technology Committee, additionally bars electric and gas utilities from denying service to hardship customers from November 1 through May 1.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Energy and Technology Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13    Nay 8    (03/16/2010)