



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 518**

February Session, 2016

Senate Bill No. 420

*Senate, April 6, 2016*

The Committee on Planning and Development reported through SEN. OSTEN of the 19th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM TO IDENTIFY RESIDENTS WITH UNMET NEEDS BASED ON UNPAID WATER UTILITY BILLS.***

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

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) "Water company" has the same  
2 meaning as provided in section 25-32a of the general statutes.

3 (b) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management shall  
4 establish a pilot program, to be implemented in municipalities with  
5 populations greater than one hundred thousand for a two-year period  
6 beginning January 1, 2017, for the purpose of identifying residential  
7 water utility customers whose service has been terminated by a water  
8 company at least once in the previous twenty-four months due to a late  
9 payment or unpaid bill and whose water utility accounts reflect  
10 unpaid balances of one hundred fifty dollars or more. Customers  
11 identified pursuant to this subsection shall be deemed residents with  
12 unmet needs.

13 (c) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, in  
 14 consultation with municipalities, water companies and other interested  
 15 parties, shall consider the creation and implementation of a program  
 16 or programs to assess the unmet needs of such residents and provide  
 17 assistance that will enable such residents to meet their needs. Such  
 18 program or programs may (1) allow residents with unmet needs to  
 19 make small down payments on unpaid balances or extend payment  
 20 deadlines in order to avoid the termination of service, (2) provide  
 21 financial counseling to residents with unmet needs, or (3) provide  
 22 residents with unmet needs with information on public assistance  
 23 programs for which such residents may be eligible. Such program or  
 24 programs may utilize private funding sources.

25 (d) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, in  
 26 consultation with municipalities and water companies, shall submit a  
 27 report, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the  
 28 joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance  
 29 of matters relating to local governments and public health, on their  
 30 findings pursuant to subsection (b) of this section and  
 31 recommendations pursuant to subsection (c) of this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section

**PD**      *Joint Favorable*

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:**

<b>Agency Affected</b>	<b>Fund-Effect</b>	<b>FY 17 \$</b>	<b>FY 18 \$</b>
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits <sup>1</sup>	GF - Cost	At least 36,000	At least 36,000
Policy & Mgmt., Off.	GF - Cost	At least 90,000	At least 90,000

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:**

<b>Municipalities</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>FY 17 \$</b>	<b>FY 18 \$</b>
Municipal Water Companies	Revenue Gain	Potential	Potential

**Explanation**

The bill requires the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to implement a pilot program in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, and Waterbury to assist residents in paying their water bills.

Due to the potential number of eligible participants, OPM may have to hire at least one person to administer such a program at a cost of approximately \$126,000 annually (\$90,000 for base salary and \$36,000 for fringe benefits.)

To the extent that the bill facilitates the payment of overdue water bills, there would be a revenue gain to municipal water companies.

The bill allows the use of private funds for the program, but does

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<sup>1</sup>The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 39.94% of payroll in FY 17 and FY 18.

not specify any other funding source.

***The Out Years***

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

**OLR Bill Analysis**

**SB 420**

***AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM TO IDENTIFY RESIDENTS WITH UNMET NEEDS BASED ON UNPAID WATER UTILITY BILLS.***

**SUMMARY:**

The Office of Legislative Research does not analyze Special Acts.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 11    Nay 9    (03/18/2016)