



Legislative
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HB 20-1412

**FINAL
FISCAL NOTE**

Drafting Number: LLS 20-1256
Prime Sponsors: Rep. Kennedy; Cutter
 Sen. Story; Zenzinger
Date: July 27, 2020
Bill Status: Signed into Law
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Bill Topic: **COVID-19 UTILITY BILL PAYMENT-RELATED ASSISTANCE**

Summary of Fiscal Impact:

<input type="checkbox"/> State Revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> TABOR Refund
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Expenditure	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Transfer	<input type="checkbox"/> Statutory Public Entity

This bill allocates \$4.8 million of CARES Act funding to the Colorado Energy Office to provide direct utility bill payment assistance to households facing economic hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic through its nonprofit partner, Energy Outreach Colorado. Any unexpended funds must be credited to the Unemployment Compensation Fund for expenditure prior to year end. The bill creates a state transfer and increases state expenditures in FY 2020-21.

Appropriation Summary: No appropriation is required; expenditures are from a continuously appropriated cash fund.

Fiscal Note Status: The fiscal note reflects the enacted bill.

**Table 1
State Fiscal Impacts Under HB 20-1412**

		FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22
Revenue		-	-
Expenditures	Cash Funds	\$4.8 million	-
		\$4.8 million	
Transfers	General Fund*	(\$4.8 million)	-
	Cash Funds	\$4.8 million	
		\$0	
TABOR Refund		-	-

* CARE subaccount of the General Fund.

Summary of Legislation

This bill allocates \$4.8 million in federal CARES Act funding to the Colorado Energy Office (CEO) to provide direct utility bill payment assistance to households facing economic hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic through its nonprofit partner, Energy Outreach Colorado. Funding must be spent on or before December 4, 2020, and Energy Outreach Colorado is prohibited from using any of this funding for administrative purposes. Any unexpended funds must be returned and credited to the Unemployment Compensation Fund, to be expended by December 30, 2020. The CEO is required to report on how direct utility bill payments were made in its annual reporting to the General Assembly and Office of the State Auditor.

Background

In Colorado, direct bill assistance is overseen by two agencies: the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Colorado Energy Office (CEO).

The DHS oversees the Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) which operates during the heating season in accordance with the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. LEAP applications are accepted from November through April. County offices and Goodwill deliver the direct service.

The CEO passes through funding to the Colorado-based nonprofit Energy Outreach Colorado, which provides direct bill payment assistance to low-income households when DHS is not accepting LEAP applications. These funds are expended in households outside of the heating season.

State Transfer

In FY 2020-21, the bill transfers \$4.8 million from the CARE subaccount of the General Fund to the newly created Coronavirus Relief Account in the Energy Outreach Colorado Low-income Energy Assistance Fund.

State Expenditures

The bill increases state expenditures in the Colorado Energy Office by \$4.8 million in FY 2020-21 only from the continuously appropriated Energy Outreach Colorado Low-income Energy Assistance Fund. Workload will also increase to complete the reporting required under the bill.

Effective Date

The bill was signed into law by the Governor and took effect June 22, 2020.

State and Local Government Contacts

Colorado Energy Office Human Services Treasury