

SB0556/163524/1

BY: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 556
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 3, strike “**Rate Consolidation and**”; strike beginning with “requiring” in line 4 down through “companies;” in line 11 and substitute “authorizing the Public Service Commission to require a water company, sewage disposal company, or water and sewage disposal company to adopt a certain limited-income mechanism; requiring the Commission to study the feasibility of requiring certain companies to adopt a limited-income mechanism to benefit limited-income customers;”; in line 16, strike “and 4-309(d)”; and in line 21, strike “4-307 and 4-309(a) and (e)” and substitute “4-309”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On pages 2 and 3, strike in their entirety the lines beginning with line 20 on page 2 through line 30 on page 3, inclusive.

On page 4, in line 14, strike the colon; in lines 15, 16, and 17, strike “**1.**”, “**2.**”, and “**3.**”, respectively; in lines 15 and 16, in each instance, strike the brackets; in lines 15 and 16, in each instance, strike the semicolon; strike beginning with the semicolon in line 17 down through “**COMPANY**” in line 20; and after line 22, insert:

“(b) The General Assembly finds and declares that the societal benefits of a well-constructed limited-income mechanism to benefit Maryland’s eligible limited-income customers are in the public interest.

(c) (1) Subject to the approval of the Commission, a utility company shall adopt a limited-income mechanism to benefit an eligible limited-income customer.

(2) Notwithstanding § 4-503(b) of this title, the mechanism may take the form of a program, tariff provision, credit, rate, rider, or other means to assist an eligible limited-income customer to afford a utility service.

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(3) A municipal electric utility may adopt a limited-income mechanism subject to the approval of the Commission in the same manner as a utility company in accordance with this section.

(4) THE COMMISSION MAY REQUIRE A WATER COMPANY, SEWAGE DISPOSAL COMPANY, OR WATER AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL COMPANY TO ADOPT A LIMITED-INCOME MECHANISM SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE COMMISSION IN THE SAME MANNER AS A UTILITY COMPANY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION.

On page 5, after line 27, insert:

“(f) If an approved limited-income mechanism requires that the Office of Home Energy Programs must certify an eligible limited-income customer’s qualifications to participate in a limited-income mechanism, the Office shall certify an eligible limited-income customer’s qualifications before the customer may participate in the mechanism.

“(g) An eligible limited-income customer who participates in a mechanism under this section may also be eligible for other assistance programs offered in the State, including those offered by a utility company or the Office of Home Energy Programs, the Department of Housing and Community Development, or any other public or private source.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) “Eligible limited-income customer” and “limited-income mechanism” have the meanings stated in § 4-309 of the Public Utilities Article.

(3) “Sewage disposal company” and “water company” have the meanings stated in § 1-101 of the Public Utilities Article.

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(b) The Public Service Commission shall study the feasibility of requiring the following companies to adopt a limited-income mechanism to benefit eligible limited-income customers:

- (1) a water company;
- (2) a water and sewage disposal company; and
- (3) a sewage disposal company.

(c) On or before December 1, 2026, the Public Service Commission shall report its findings to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 1 of this Act shall take effect July 1, 2027.”;

in line 28, strike “2.” and substitute “4.”; and in line 28, after “That” insert “, except as provided in Section 3 of this Act,”.