

48: 2-29.17

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST

(Lifeline credit program - increase maximum amount of credit)

NJSA 48:2-29.17

LAWS 1982

CHAPTER 140

Bill No. A1113

Sponsor(s) Doyle and others

Date Introduced March 8, 1982

Committee: Assembly Revenue, Finance and Appropriations

Senate Transportation & Communications; Revenue, Finance & Appropriations

Amended during passage Yes No

Date of Passage: Assembly May 13, 1982

Senate July 22, 1982

Date of approval Sept. 16, 1982

Following statements are attached if available:

Sponsor statement Yes No

Committee Statement: Assembly Yes No

Senate Yes No

not attached since identical to sponsor's statement 6-10-82 & 7-12-82

Fiscal Note Yes No

Veto Message Yes No

Message on signing Yes No

Following were printed:

Reports Yes No

Hearings Yes No

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ASSEMBLY, No. 1113

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MARCH 8, 1982

By Assemblymen DOYLE, VAN WAGNER, PATERO, BOCCHINI
and JACKMAN

Referred to Committee on Revenue, Finance and Appropriations

AN ACT concerning utility bill credits, and amending P. L. 1979,
c. 197.

1 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
2 *of New Jersey:*

1 1. Section 3 of P. L. 1979, c. 197 (C. 48:2-29.17) is amended to
2 read as follows:

3 3. The "Lifeline Credit Program" shall consist of an annual credit
4 against the electric or gas utility bill of each eligible residential
5 electric or gas customer at his principal residence. Such credit shall
6 be applied to the electric or gas utility bills of such customer as
7 soon as may be practicable, but in no case later than the bills issued
8 in October of each year or as soon thereafter as eligibility is deter-
9 mined, and shall be applied to each subsequent utility bill after the
10 first until the full amount of the credit is exhausted. No household
11 shall receive more than one annual credit. In the event that electric
12 and gas are provided to the same customer by the same utility, the
13 total annual credit shall be applied to the combined bills from such
14 utility. In the event that electric and gas are provided to the same
15 customer by two separate utilities, half of the total annual credit
16 shall be applied to the bills from each such utility. The annual credit
17 shall be **[\$150.00]** *\$175.00*. Subject to the availability of appropria-
18 tions, the level of credit shall be increased to **[\$175.00]** *\$200.00*
19 beginning in October, **[1982]** *1983*.

1 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 1982.

EXPLANATION—Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill
is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.
Matter printed in italics *thus* is new matter.

STATEMENT

This bill increases from \$150.00 to \$175.00 the annual electric and gas utility bill credit provided to eligible senior and disabled citizens under the "Lifeline Credit Program." This increase would apply to fiscal year 1982-83.

This bill also increases the credit to \$200.00 for fiscal year 1983-84 and each year thereafter subject to the availability of appropriations.

STATEMENT

This bill increases from \$150.00 to \$175.00 the annual electric and gas utility bill credit provided to eligible senior and disabled citizens under the "Lifeline Credit Program." This increase would apply to fiscal year 1982-83.

This bill also increases the credit to \$200.00 for fiscal year 1983-84 and each year thereafter subject to the availability of appropriations.

A1113(1982)

SENATE TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 1113

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 10, 1982

This bill increases from \$150.00 to \$175.00 the annual electric and gas utility bill credit provided to eligible senior and disabled citizens under the "Lifeline Credit Program." This increase would apply to fiscal year 1982-1983.

Subject to the availability of appropriations, this bill also increases the credit to \$200.00 in fiscal year 1983-1984, beginning in October 1983.

The proposed budget for 1982-83 provides for the funding of this program during that fiscal year. The revenues are to be derived from the tax on casino gross revenue.

SENATE REVENUE, FINANCE AND APPROPRIATIONS
COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 1113

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JULY 12, 1982

Assembly Bill No. 1113 increases the annual credit under the "Life-line Credit Program" from \$150.00 to \$175.00. The cost of the \$25.00 per recipient increase is included in the budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1983.

The bill further directs that, subject to the availability of appropriations, the credit shall be increased to \$200.00 beginning in October, 1983. The increased cost for this later provision would first impact on the State budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1984.

FISCAL BACKGROUND

The State budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1983, includes \$42,070,000.00 for lifeline credits. That amount provides \$175.00 each for an estimated 240,400 recipients.

FISCAL NOTE TO
ASSEMBLY, No. 1113

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JULY 7, 1982

Assembly Bill No. 1113, of 1982, would increase from \$150.00 to \$175.00 the annual electric and gas utility bill credit provided to eligible senior and disabled citizens under the "Lifeline Credit Program" in FY 1983. The bill would also increase the credit to \$200.00 for FY 1984 and each year thereafter subject to availability of funds.

The Department of Human Services indicates that the additional \$25.00 utility bill credit, based on 240,400 eligible persons, will cost \$6,010,000.00. For FY 1983, the cost is already budgeted.

The Office of Legislative Services concurs.

In compliance with written request received, there is hereby submitted a fiscal estimate for the above bill, pursuant to P. L. 1980, c. 67.

RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

CONTACT: CARL GOLDEN

SEPTEMBER 16, 1982

Governor Thomas H. Kean today signed a package of legislation to increase the reduced utility cost program for senior citizens, to broaden educational opportunities for seniors, and to permit increased aid for senior citizen organizations.

The Governor signed the four bills during a ceremony at a Senior Citizens Cultural Festival in the South Mountain Arena in West Orange. The event was sponsored by the Essex County Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs.

The four bills are:

• An increase from \$150 to \$175 in the amount of credit against utility bills for eligible senior citizens and the disabled for this fiscal year and an increase to \$200 in the next fiscal year. The increase will cost \$6 million each year.

• The same increase in the credit for eligible senior citizens and the disabled who are tenants, rather than homeowners. The increase will cost \$2.6 million each year.

• Elimination of the \$3,000 now in the law as the limit which counties and municipalities may contribute to a non-profit senior citizen center.

• Permits state colleges to enroll senior citizens in credit courses free of charge if space is available.

"The increase in the lifeline credit will help seniors and the disabled to keep pace with the increase in utility costs and will aid in easing the financial burden caused by those cost increases," Kean said. "For many of our seniors and disabled, this assistance in meeting utility bills has spelled the difference between financial stability and bankruptcy."

"Removal of the ceiling on amounts which counties and municipalities may contribute to a senior citizen center will give local governing bodies much more flexibility in their level of support for such centers," Kean said. "In many instances, the \$3,000 limit prevented local governments from providing the level of assistance necessary to keep the centers in full operation."

Kean said permitting seniors to enroll in credit courses at state colleges free of charge "is another example of government's commitment to assuring that the elderly population of the state have the opportunity to broaden their educational horizons."

The bill to increase the lifeline credit for homeowners, A-1113, was sponsored by Assemblyman John Doyle, D-Ocean.

The bill to increase the lifeline credit for tenants, A-1112, was sponsored by Assemblyman Richard VanWagner, D-Monmouth.

The bill to eliminate the contribution ceiling, A-547, was sponsored by Assemblyman Jorge Rod, R-Ocean.

The bill to permit seniors to take credit courses free of charge, A-536, was sponsored by Assemblyman John Bennett, R-Monmouth.

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