



General Assembly

January Session, 2021

**Substitute Bill No. 356**



**AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN ENERGY EFFICIENCY RETROFIT  
GRANT PROGRAM FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING.**

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) Not later than September  
2 1, 2021, the Department of Housing shall establish an energy efficiency  
3 retrofit grant program. Such program shall award grants to fund the  
4 installation of energy efficient upgrades to affordable housing, as  
5 defined in section 8-39a of the general statutes, including, but not  
6 limited to, property of a housing authority, as defined in section 8-39 of  
7 the general statutes. Such upgrades shall include, but not be limited to,  
8 the installation of rooftop solar photovoltaic panels, heat pumps and  
9 balanced ventilation and other devices to mitigate gas leaks, mold,  
10 vermiculite and asbestos.

11 (b) The Department of Housing shall develop standards for the  
12 energy efficiency retrofit grant program. The department may consult  
13 with other state agencies and quasi-public agencies, and shall consider  
14 the energy performance standards developed pursuant to section 16a-  
15 38 of the general statutes, in establishing the standards for the grant  
16 program. The department may coordinate with other state agencies to  
17 implement the grant program in conjunction with other existing state  
18 programs that have the purpose of installing or otherwise assisting state  
19 residents to obtain energy efficient upgrades.

20 (c) A grant applicant shall submit an application to the Commissioner  
21 of Housing on forms prescribed by the commissioner, which shall  
22 include, but not be limited to: (1) A description of the proposed project;  
23 (2) an explanation of the expected benefits of the project in relation to  
24 the purposes of this section; (3) information concerning the financial and  
25 technical capacity of the applicant to undertake the proposed project; (4)  
26 a project budget; and (5) any other information deemed necessary by the  
27 commissioner. The commissioner shall prioritize grants to applicants  
28 who (A) use the services of certified home energy auditors and local  
29 contractors with project labor agreements who pay the prevailing wage  
30 and who make good faith efforts to hire, or cause to be hired, available  
31 and qualified minority business enterprises, as defined in section 4a-60g  
32 of the general statutes, and (B) upgrade affordable housing for families  
33 with a cumulative annual income of not more than fifty thousand  
34 dollars.

35 (d) The energy efficiency retrofit grant program shall be funded by  
36 the fee collected pursuant to section 29-263 of the general statutes, as  
37 amended by this act, and shall provide grants with the goal of  
38 completing energy efficient retrofits in five per cent of affordable  
39 housing units in 2021, five per cent of affordable housing units in 2022,  
40 five per cent of affordable housing units in 2023, ten per cent of  
41 affordable housing units in 2024 and ten per cent of affordable housing  
42 units in 2025.

43 (e) Not later than January 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, the  
44 Commissioner of Housing shall submit a report, in accordance with the  
45 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing  
46 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
47 relating to housing. Such report shall include data relating to progress  
48 made in attaining the goals of the program.

49 Sec. 2. Section 29-263 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
50 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

51 (a) Except as provided in subsection (h) of section 29-252a and the

52 State Building Code adopted pursuant to subsection (a) of section 29-  
53 252, after October 1, 1970, no building or structure shall be constructed  
54 or altered until an application has been filed with the building official  
55 and a permit issued. Such permit shall be issued or refused, in whole or  
56 in part, within thirty days after the date of an application. No permit  
57 shall be issued except upon application of the owner of the premises  
58 affected or the owner's authorized agent. No permit shall be issued to a  
59 contractor who is required to be registered pursuant to chapter 400, for  
60 work to be performed by such contractor, unless the name, business  
61 address and Department of Consumer Protection registration number  
62 of such contractor is clearly marked on the application for the permit,  
63 and the contractor has presented such contractor's certificate of  
64 registration as a home improvement contractor. Prior to the issuance of  
65 a permit and within said thirty-day period, the building official shall  
66 review the plans of buildings or structures to be constructed or altered,  
67 including, but not limited to, plans prepared by an architect licensed  
68 pursuant to chapter 390, a professional engineer licensed pursuant to  
69 chapter 391 or an interior designer registered pursuant to chapter 396a  
70 acting within the scope of such license or registration, to determine their  
71 compliance with the requirements of the State Building Code and,  
72 where applicable, the local fire marshal shall review such plans to  
73 determine their compliance with the Fire Safety Code. Such plans  
74 submitted for review shall be in substantial compliance with the  
75 provisions of the State Building Code and, where applicable, with the  
76 provisions of the Fire Safety Code.

77 (b) On and after July 1, 1999, the building official shall assess an  
78 education fee on each building permit application. During the fiscal year  
79 commencing July 1, 1999, the amount of such fee shall be sixteen cents  
80 per one thousand dollars of construction value as declared on the  
81 building permit application and the building official shall remit such  
82 fees quarterly to the Department of Administrative Services, for deposit  
83 in the General Fund. Upon deposit in the General Fund, the amount of  
84 such fees shall be credited to the appropriation to the Department of  
85 Administrative Services and shall be used for the code training and

86 educational programs established pursuant to section 29-251c and the  
87 educational programs required in subsections (a) and (b) of section 29-  
88 262. On and after July 1, 2000, the assessment shall be made in  
89 accordance with regulations adopted pursuant to subsection (d) of  
90 section 29-251c. All fees collected pursuant to this subsection shall be  
91 maintained in a separate account by the local building department.  
92 During the fiscal year commencing July 1, 1999, the local building  
93 department may retain two per cent of such fees for administrative costs  
94 incurred in collecting such fees and maintaining such account. On and  
95 after July 1, 2000, the portion of such fees which may be retained by a  
96 local building department shall be determined in accordance with  
97 regulations adopted pursuant to subsection (d) of section 29-251c. No  
98 building official shall assess such education fee on a building permit  
99 application to repair or replace a concrete foundation that has  
100 deteriorated due to the presence of pyrrhotite.

101 (c) On and after July 1, 2021, the building official shall assess an  
102 additional fee of five dollars on each building permit application. The  
103 building official shall remit such fees quarterly to the Department of  
104 Administrative Services for deposit in the General Fund. Upon deposit  
105 in the General Fund, the amount of such fees shall be credited to the  
106 appropriation to the Department of Housing and shall be used to fund  
107 the energy efficiency retrofit grant program established under section 1  
108 of this act. All fees collected pursuant to this subsection shall be  
109 maintained in a separate account by the local building department.

110 [(c)] (d) Any municipality may, by ordinance adopted by its  
111 legislative body, exempt Class I renewable energy source projects from  
112 payment of building permit fees imposed by the municipality.

113 [(d)] (e) Notwithstanding any municipal charter, home rule  
114 ordinance or special act, no municipality shall collect an application fee  
115 on a building permit application to repair or replace a concrete  
116 foundation that has deteriorated due to the presence of pyrrhotite.

117 Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 16-245nn of the general statutes is

118 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*  
119 *1, 2021*):

120 (b) Not later than January 1, 2016, each municipality shall incorporate  
121 residential solar photovoltaic systems in its building permit application  
122 process or utilize a residential solar photovoltaic system permit  
123 application supplement. Each municipality may (1) develop and post on  
124 the municipality's Internet web site a permit application for the  
125 installation of a residential solar photovoltaic system, (2) allow for  
126 electronic submission of such application, and (3) exempt such system  
127 from payment of permit fees pursuant to subsection [(c)] (d) of section  
128 29-263, as amended by this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	29-263
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2021</i>	16-245nn(b)

**Statement of Legislative Commissioners:**

Section 3 was added for consistency with the changes being made in Section 2.

**HSG** Joint Favorable Subst. -LCO