



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 384

February Session, 2024



AN ACT CONCERNING THE LOW-INCOME ENERGY ADVISORY BOARD.

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

1 Section 1. Section 16a-41b of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

3 (a) There shall be a Low-Income Energy and Water Advisory Board
4 which shall consist of the following members or their designees: (1) A
5 representative of each electric and gas public service company
6 designated by each such company; (2) the chairperson of the Public
7 Utilities Regulatory Authority; (3) the Consumer Counsel; (4) the chief
8 executive [director] officer of Operation Fuel; (5) the executive director
9 of Infoline; (6) the director of the Connecticut Local Administrators of
10 Social Services; (7) [the executive director of Legal Assistance Resource
11 Center of Connecticut] a designee of Connecticut Legal Services, Inc.; (8)
12 the Connecticut state director of AARP; (9) a designee of the Norwich
13 Public Utility; (10) a designee of the Independent Connecticut
14 Petroleum Association; (11) two representatives of water companies as
15 defined in section 25-32a, designated by the Connecticut Water Works
16 Association; (12) the executive director of the Connecticut Fair Housing
17 Center; (13) the executive director of the Center for Children's
18 Advocacy; (14) the executive director of the Connecticut Green Building
19 Council; and (15) two representatives of the community action agencies

20 administering energy assistance programs under contract with the
21 Department of Social Services, designated by the Connecticut
22 Association for Community Action. The Secretary of the Office of Policy
23 and Management and the Commissioners of Social Services and Energy
24 and Environmental Protection, or their designees, shall serve as
25 nonvoting members of the board.

26 (b) The Low-Income Energy and Water Advisory Board shall advise
27 and assist the Office of Policy and Management and the Department of
28 Social Services in the planning, development, implementation and
29 coordination of energy-assistance-related programs and policies and
30 low-income weatherization assistance programs and policies, shall
31 advise the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
32 regarding the impact of utility rates and policies, and shall make
33 recommendations to the General Assembly regarding (1) legislation and
34 plans subject to legislative approval, and (2) administration of the block
35 grant program authorized under the Low-Income Energy Assistance
36 Act, as described in section 16a-41a, as amended by this act, to ensure
37 affordable access to residential energy services to low-income state
38 residents.

39 (c) The Low-Income Energy and Water Advisory Board may advise
40 and assist the Office of Policy and Management, the Department of
41 Social Services and the Department of Energy and Environmental
42 Protection in the planning, development, implementation and
43 coordination of water-assistance-related programs and policies,
44 including programs and policies to alleviate the impact of utility rates,
45 and shall make recommendations to the General Assembly regarding
46 the availability and implementation of heating and water assistance
47 programs that benefit low-income and moderate-income households,
48 including, but not limited to, the Connecticut Low Income Household
49 Water Assistance Program.

50 [(c)] (d) The board shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson
51 from among its voting members.

52 [(d)] (e) The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection,
53 or his or her designee, shall provide notice of meetings to the members
54 of the Low-Income Energy and Water Advisory Board, provide space
55 for such meetings, maintain minutes and publish reports of the board.

56 [(e)] (f) The Low-Income Energy and Water Advisory Board shall
57 convene and devise recommendations to improve the availability,
58 administration and implementation of heating and water assistance
59 programs, particularly those created to benefit low-income households,
60 through coordination and optimization of existing energy efficiency,
61 water conservation and energy assistance programs. [Such
62 recommendations shall consider: (1) How the Department of Energy
63 and Environmental Protection, Department of Social Services,
64 community action agencies, as defined in section 17b-885, electric
65 distribution companies, as defined in section 16-1, and municipal
66 electric utilities, as defined in section 7-233b, can securely share heating
67 assistance program applicant data, with respect to customer energy
68 usage levels, past participation and eligibility for energy assistance and
69 energy efficiency programs, and other data deemed relevant to improve
70 coordination among such programs and program administrators; (2) the
71 costs and benefits of current energy assistance and energy efficiency
72 programs and how to maximize customer benefits through such
73 customers' participation in any combination of energy assistance and
74 energy efficiency programs; (3) how to streamline the application
75 process for energy assistance and energy efficiency program applicants
76 and the possible development of joint electronic applications; (4) how to
77 make energy assistance and energy efficiency programs more accessible
78 and feasible for tenants in rental housing units, including, but not
79 limited to, how to best secure landlord permission for such services; and
80 (5) coordination efforts to best improve boiler and furnace replacement
81 programs.] Not later than [January 1, 2016] October 15, 2024, and
82 biennially thereafter, the Low-Income Energy and Water Advisory
83 Board shall report such recommendations, in accordance with section
84 11-4a, to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having
85 cognizance of matters relating to energy, appropriations and human

86 services.

87 Sec. 2. Subsection (g) of section 16a-41a of the 2024 supplement to the
88 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
89 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2024*):

90 (g) The Commissioner of Social Services shall submit each plan or
91 report described in subsection (a) of this section to the Low-Income
92 Energy and Water Advisory Board, established pursuant to section 16a-
93 41b, as amended by this act, not later than seven days prior to
94 submitting such plan or report to the joint standing committee of the
95 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to energy and
96 technology, appropriations and human services.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	16a-41b
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2024</i>	16a-41a(g)

ET *Joint Favorable Subst.*