

1 HB162
2 154982-4
3 By Representative Shedd
4 RFD: Children and Senior Advocacy
5 First Read: 14-JAN-14

2
3
4
5
6
7
8 SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, the Alabama Department
9 of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)
10 administers the distribution of certain grant funds
11 allocated to provide heating and cooling assistance
12 to qualifying low-income persons.

13 This bill would require ADECA to develop a
14 procedure that would give senior citizens who
15 qualify for these funds priority access to a
16 percentage of the funds for a limited time period.

17
18 A BILL
19 TO BE ENTITLED
20 AN ACT

21
22 To require the Alabama Department of Economic and
23 Community Affairs to develop a procedure by which senior
24 citizens would receive priority access to certain grant moneys
25 administered by the department to provide heating and cooling
26 assistance.

27 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

1 Section 1. (a) The purpose of this act is to provide
2 low-income senior citizens of this state with priority access
3 to funds available through the Alabama Department of Economic
4 and Community Affairs (ADECA) and to provide assistance with
5 heating and cooling costs to low-income persons. Such funds
6 are generally allocated by ADECA to local community action
7 agencies for distribution on a first come, first served basis.
8 Due to the mobility limitation experienced by many senior
9 citizens, these funds are often allocated before low-income
10 senior citizens in need of assistance have the opportunity to
11 access them.

12 (b) For purposes of this act, the following terms
13 have the following meanings:

14 (1) LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
15 (LIHEAP). A program funded through grant moneys from the U.S.
16 Department of Health and Human Services and administered by
17 the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
18 (ADECA) to provide assistance with heating and cooling costs
19 to certain low-income persons who have an income that is not
20 more than 150 percent of the federally established poverty
21 level.

22 (2) OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED SENIOR CENTER. A senior
23 center operated by either an agency of a local county or
24 municipal government or operated as an area agency on aging
25 designated by the Alabama Department of Senior Services as an
26 organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of the lives
27 of senior citizens.

1 (3) SENIOR CITIZEN. A resident of the state who is
2 60 years of age or older.

3 (c) ADECA shall develop a uniform procedure for
4 distribution of LIHEAP funds to be used by all local community
5 action agencies and nonprofit organizations with which it
6 contracts to disburse such funds. Notwithstanding any federal
7 law or regulation to the contrary, the procedure established
8 by ADECA shall insure that senior citizens who qualify for
9 LIHEAP funds may apply for the funds at any officially
10 recognized senior center in the state at least two weeks prior
11 to general distribution of the funds. ADECA may enter into
12 memoranda of understanding with officially recognized senior
13 centers to process applications requesting heating and cooling
14 assistance. However, no officially recognized senior center
15 shall be required to enter into a memoranda or agreement in
16 order to process LIHEAP applications at the center.

17 Section 2. This act shall become effective on the
18 first day of the third month following its passage and
19 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.