



REVISED

2/19/21

ITEM NO.

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COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 18, 2021
TO: Public Outreach and Legislation Committee
FROM: Steve Cole
Assistant General Manager *SC*
SUBJECT: Discussion of Water Affordability Assistance Programs

SUMMARY

Per a request from the Public Outreach Committee, this item is brought forward to facilitate understanding and discussion of water affordability assistance programs (also called ratepayer assistance or lifeline assistance).

DISCUSSION

This legislative session, Senator Bill Dodd has introduced SB 222, Low Income Water Rate Assistance Fund. This measure will set up the Water Affordability Assistance Fund in the State Treasury and authorize the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB, or Board), in consultation with an Advisory Board to establish guidelines and criteria for the program.

SB 222 authorizes use of monies deposited in the Fund including:

- Direct water bill assistance
- Water bill credits to renters
- Water crisis assistance
- Water efficiency measures for low-income households
- Short-term assistance to public water systems

More information can be found here:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB222

BACKGROUND:

The issue has been discussed for several years. When Senator Dodd was in the Assembly, he carried AB 401 that directed the SWRCB to review the issue and provide a report. Below is a link to AB 401 and the report.

http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/15-16/bill/asm/ab_0401-0450/ab_401_bill_20151009_chaptered.pdf

Revised Link:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/conservation_portal/assistance/docs/2019/draft_report_ab401.pdf

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

None at this current time.

RECOMMENDATION

This item is provided for informational purposes.

Attachments:

ACWA State Legislative Committee Analysis
SB 222 Fact Sheet from Senator Dodd's office