

SENATE BILL 719

C5

2lr1970
CF HB 1001

By: **Senator Benson**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2022

Assigned to: Finance

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted

Read second time: March 7, 2022

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Human Services – Office of Home Energy Programs – Power to the People Pilot**
3 **Program Personnel and Uniform Redetermination Process**

4 FOR the purpose of providing that certain funding for the Power to the People Pilot
5 Program be used to hire certain part-time personnel instead of full-time personnel;
6 requiring the Office of Home Energy Programs to develop a certain redetermination
7 process to assist certain eligible energy customers who are at least a certain age in
8 enrolling in energy assistance programs; and generally relating to the Office of Home
9 Energy Programs and energy assistance programs.

10 BY renumbering

11 Article – Human Services

12 Section 5–5A–09

13 to be Section 5–5A–10

14 Annotated Code of Maryland

15 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

16 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,

17 Article – Human Services

18 Section 5–5A–01(d) and 5–5A–08(g)(1)

19 Annotated Code of Maryland

20 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

21 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,

22 Article – Human Services

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 Section 5-5A-08(g)(7)
 2 Annotated Code of Maryland
 3 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

4 BY adding to
 5 Article – Human Services
 6 Section 5-5A-09
 7 Annotated Code of Maryland
 8 (2019 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
 10 That Section(s) 5-5A-09 of Article – Human Services of the Annotated Code of Maryland
 11 be renumbered to be Section(s) 5-5A-10.

12 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
 13 as follows:

14 **Article – Human Services**

15 5-5A-01.

16 (d) “Office” means the Office of Home Energy Programs.

17 5-5A-08.

18 (g) (1) On or before July 1, 2022, the Office, in coordination with the United
 19 Way of Central Maryland and the Fuel Fund of Maryland, shall establish the Power to the
 20 People Pilot Program.

21 (7) (i) For fiscal years 2023 and 2024, the Governor shall include in the
 22 annual budget bill an appropriation of \$80,000 to the Office for the Pilot Program.

23 (ii) The funds appropriated under subparagraph (i) of this
 24 paragraph shall be used to hire:

25 1. one [full-time] PART-TIME intake specialist for the
 26 2-1-1 Maryland United Way Helpline;

27 2. one [full-time] PART-TIME case manager for the 2-1-1
 28 Maryland United Way Helpline; and

29 3. one part-time project coordinator at the Fuel Fund of
 30 Maryland.

31 **5-5A-09.**

1 **(A) (1) THE OFFICE SHALL DEVELOP A UNIFORM REDETERMINATION**
2 **PROCESS TO ASSIST ELIGIBLE ENERGY CUSTOMERS WHO ARE AT LEAST 65 YEARS**
3 **OLD IN ENROLLING IN ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.**

4 **(2) THE REDETERMINATION PROCESS DEVELOPED UNDER**
5 **PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE UPDATED ANNUALLY.**

6 **(B) THE REDETERMINATION PROCESS SHALL REQUIRE LOCAL**
7 **ADMINISTERING AGENCIES TO:**

8 **(1) HAVE AN ACCESSIBLE LOCATION TO RECEIVE ELIGIBLE ENERGY**
9 **CUSTOMERS' APPLICATIONS ACCORDING TO THE OFFICE'S CONTRACTUAL OR**
10 **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS; AND**

11 **(2) ESTABLISH A POLICY REFLECTING REASONABLE**
12 **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR APPLICANTS WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR REQUEST**
13 **ACCOMMODATION, INCLUDING BY:**

14 **(I) ARRANGING FOR A HOME VISIT; OR**

15 **(II) ALLOWING AN INDIVIDUAL TO APPLY ON THE BEHALF OF AN**
16 **ELIGIBLE ENERGY CUSTOMER.**

17 **(C) THE OFFICE SHALL PROVIDE NOTICE OF THE REDETERMINATION**
18 **PROCESS TO ALL ELIGIBLE ENERGY CUSTOMERS AND INCLUDE WITH THE NOTICE**
19 **AN ADDRESSED ENVELOPE WITH PREPAID POSTAGE.**

20 **(D) IN ADDITION TO THE NOTICE REQUIRED UNDER SUBSECTION (C) OF**
21 **THIS SECTION, THE OFFICE SHALL:**

22 **(1) REQUIRE YEARLY VERIFICATION OF STATUS FOR EACH**
23 **CUSTOMER THAT QUALIFIES FOR THE REDETERMINATION PROCESS;**

24 **(2) ALLOW AN ELIGIBLE ENERGY CUSTOMER 45 DAYS TO RESPOND TO**
25 **A REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION; AND**

26 **(3) MAINTAIN RECORDS ORGANIZED BY COUNTY, INCLUDING**
27 **RECORDS ON THE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS DURING THE PREVIOUS YEAR:**

28 **(I) THAT WERE ELIGIBLE FOR REDETERMINATION;**

29 **(II) WHOSE NOTICE OF THE REDETERMINATION PROCESS WAS**
30 **VERIFIED AND RETURNED; AND**

1 (III) THAT WERE REENROLLED IN THE REDETERMINATION
2 PROCESS.

3 (E) THE OFFICE MAY NOT REQUIRE A NEW APPLICATION FOR A CURRENT
4 ENERGY CUSTOMER WHOSE ELIGIBILITY HAS NOT CHANGED FROM THE PREVIOUS
5 YEAR.

6 (F) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1 EACH YEAR, THE OFFICE SHALL REPORT,
7 IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, TO THE
8 GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE INFORMATION COLLECTED UNDER SUBSECTION (D)(3)
9 OF THIS SECTION.

10 (G) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS
11 SECTION.

12 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
13 October 1, 2022.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.