

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-EIGHTH SESSION

H. F. No. 3110

03/17/2014 Authored by Hortman

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Energy Policy

03/27/2014 Adoption of Report: Amended and Placed on the General Register
Read Second Time

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to energy; utilities; modifying residential customer protections pertaining
1.3 to medically necessary equipment; amending Minnesota Statutes 2012, section
1.4 216B.098, subdivision 5.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2012, section 216B.098, subdivision 5, is amended to
1.7 read:

1.8 Subd. 5. **Medically necessary equipment.** (a) A utility shall reconnect or
1.9 continue service to a customer's residence where a medical emergency exists or where
1.10 medical equipment requiring electricity necessary to sustain life is in use, provided that
1.11 the utility receives ~~from a medical doctor~~ written certification, or initial certification by
1.12 telephone and written certification within five business days, that failure to reconnect or
1.13 continue service will impair or threaten the health or safety of a resident of the customer's
1.14 household. ~~The customer must enter into a payment agreement.~~

1.15 (b) Certification of the necessity for service is required. Certification may be
1.16 provided by:

1.17 (1) a licensed medical doctor;

1.18 (2) a licensed or registered physician's assistant;

1.19 (3) a licensed or registered nurse practitioner; or

1.20 (4) a registered nurse, but only to the extent of verifying the current diagnosis or
1.21 prescriptions made by a licensed medical doctor for the customer or member of the
1.22 customer's household.

1.23 (c) Except as provided in paragraph (d), a certification may not extend beyond six
1.24 months from the date of written certification.

2.1 (d) If a utility determines that a longer certification is appropriate given a particular
2.2 customer's circumstances, the utility may, at its sole discretion, extend the duration of a
2.3 certification for up to 12 months.

2.4 (e) A certificate may be renewed, provided that the renewal complies with this
2.5 subdivision. A certification may be renewed by the same or another medical professional
2.6 who meets the qualifications of paragraph (b).

2.7 (f) A customer whose account is in arrears must contact and enter into a payment
2.8 agreement with the utility. The payment agreement must consider a customer's financial
2.9 circumstances and any extenuating circumstances of the household. The payment
2.10 agreement may, at the discretion of the utility, contain a provision by which the utility
2.11 forgives all or a portion of the amount in which the account is in arrears, which, if
2.12 implemented, extinguishes individual liability for the amount forgiven.