

A bill for an act

relating to energy; providing cold weather protection for certain delivered fuel residential heating customers; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 216B.

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

Section 1. **[216B.099] COLD WEATHER PROTECTION FOR CONSUMERS OF DELIVERED FUELS.**

Subdivision 1. Definitions. For the purposes of this section:

(1) "customer" means a residential customer with a household income at or below 50 percent of the statewide median income who is heating a residence with heating fuels;

(2) "heating fuels" means (i) liquid propane gas, (ii) number one fuel oil, and (iii) number two fuel oil;

(3) "vendor" means a dealer or distributor of heating fuels; and

(4) "cold weather period" means the period from October 15 through April 15.

Subd. 2. Cold weather protection. (a) During the cold weather period, each vendor shall offer a monthly payment agreement for customers unable to pay for the full cost of delivery for heating fuels. Any past-due bills prior to October 15 must be included in a payment agreement. A vendor may not require a customer to pay more than ten percent of the customer's monthly income. Payment agreements must consider the customer's financial circumstances.

(b) During the cold weather period, a vendor shall continue to deliver to customers who are current on a payment agreement. A customer is considered current unless the customer fails to pay two consecutive monthly payments under the agreement. A vendor making delivery to a customer with a current payment agreement may not charge the

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- 2.1 customer any additional costs or fees that would not be charged to any other customer
- 2.2 and must make available to that customer any discount program on the same basis as the
- 2.3 vendor makes available to any other customer.