

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2002 SESSION

CHAPTER 243

An Act to amend and reenact § 63.1-339 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Virginia Home Energy Assistance Program.

[H 747]

Approved March 22, 2002

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 63.1-339 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 63.1-339. Home Energy Assistance Program established.

A. The Department shall establish and operate the Home Energy Assistance Program. In administering the Program, it shall be the responsibility of the Department to:

1. Administer distributions from the Fund;

2. *Lead and facilitate meetings with the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, and other agencies of the Commonwealth, as well as any nonstate programs that elect to participate in the Home Energy Assistance Program, for the purpose of sharing information directed at alleviating the seasonal energy needs of low-income Virginians, including needs for weatherization assistance services;*

3. *Collect and analyze data regarding the amounts of energy assistance provided through the Department, categorized by fuel type in order to identify the unmet need for energy assistance in the Commonwealth;*

4. *Develop and maintain a statewide list of available private and governmental resources for low-income Virginians in need of energy assistance; and*

≥ 5. Report annually to the Governor and General Assembly on or before October 1 of each year on the effectiveness of low-income energy assistance programs in meeting the needs of low-income Virginians. *In preparing the annual report, the Department shall:*

a. *Conduct a survey biennially beginning in 2002 that shall collect information regarding the extent to which the Commonwealth's efforts in assisting low-income Virginians are adequate and are not duplicative of similar services provided by utility services providers, charitable organizations and local governments;*

b. *Obtain information on energy programs in other states; and*

c. *Obtain necessary information from the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, and other agencies of the Commonwealth, as well as any nonstate programs that elect to participate in the Home Energy Assistance Program, to complete the biennial survey and to compile the required annual report. The Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, and other agencies of the Commonwealth, as well as any nonstate programs that elect to participate in the Home Energy Assistance Program, shall provide the necessary information to the Department.*

The Department's annual reporting requirement shall cease October 1, 2007.

B. The Department is authorized to assume responsibility for administering all or any portion of any private, voluntary low-income energy assistance program upon the application of the administrator thereof, on such terms as the Department and such administrator shall agree and in accordance with applicable law and regulations. If the Department assumes administrative responsibility for administering such a voluntary program, it is authorized to receive funds collected through such voluntary program and distribute them through the Fund.