

Legislative
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3 CHARLES III, 2024

Bill 213

An Act to enact the Affordable Home Heating Act, 2024 and amend the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998

Co-sponsors:

Mrs. J. Stevens

Mr. G. Bourgouin

Mr. T. Rakocevic

Mr. P. Tabuns

Private Members' Bill

1st Reading October 22, 2024

2nd Reading

3rd Reading

Royal Assent



EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Bill enacts the *Affordable Home Heating Act, 2024*. The Act requires the Minister of Energy to develop an alternative home heating fuel strategy and to publish that strategy on a website of the Government of Ontario.

Amendments are also made to the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*. Section 36.3 is added to the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* requiring the Board to develop and submit a gas rate assistance action plan. Section 36.3 provides for the purpose and contents of the action plan as well as rules respecting publication of the plan and consultations. Subsection 36.3 (5) requires the Minister to ensure that the action plan is implemented by January 1, 2025.

**An Act to enact the Affordable Home Heating Act, 2024
and amend the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998**

His Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

Alternative home heating fuel strategy

1 (1) Within three months after the day this section comes into force, the Minister of Energy shall develop an alternative home heating fuel strategy setting out a plan for the provision of rate assistance for low-income consumers of home heating fuels other than electricity or gas.

Contents

- (2) The alternative home heating fuel strategy shall include the following:
1. A plan for providing emergency rate assistance to eligible consumers.
 2. A plan for providing ongoing rate assistance to eligible consumers.
 3. The consumers or classes of consumers who are eligible to receive rate assistance.

Publication

(3) The Minister of Energy shall publish the alternative home heating fuel strategy, within 1 month after it is developed, on a website of the Government of Ontario.

Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998

2 The *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* is amended by adding the following section:

Gas rate assistance action plan

36.3 (1) Within three months after the day section 2 of the *Affordable Home Heating Act, 2024* comes into force, the Board shall develop and submit to the Minister a gas rate assistance action plan setting out a plan for the provision of rate assistance for eligible consumers that is consistent with the purposes set out in subsection (2) of this section.

Purpose

(2) The purpose of the action plan is to prevent individuals and families in Ontario from experiencing poverty as a result of the cost of gas.

Contents

- (3) The action plan shall include the following:
1. The amount of the rate assistance to be provided.
 2. The consumers or classes of consumers who are eligible to receive rate assistance.
 3. An assessment of whether the gas rate assistance should be incorporated into the Ontario Electricity Support Program continued under subsection 79.2 (2).
 4. A strategy for implementation of rate assistance to consumers.
 5. Any other details the Board considers reasonable.

Publication and consultation

- (4) Within three months after receiving the action plan, the Minister shall,
- (a) publish the action plan on a website of the Government of Ontario;
 - (b) conduct public consultations on the contents of the action plan; and
 - (c) make any necessary revisions to the action plan as a result of the public consultations.

Implementation of gas rate assistance

(5) The Minister shall ensure that the action plan, as may be revised under subsection (4), is implemented by January 1, 2025.

Commencement

3 This Act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.

Short title

4 The short title of this Act is the *Affordable Home Heating Act, 2024*.