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SB-596 In-home supportive services: additional higher energy allowance. (2019-2020)

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Senate Bill No. 596

CHAPTER 304

An act to add Section 12301.18 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to in-home supportive services.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 2020. Filed with Secretary of State September 29, 2020.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 596, Stern. In-home supportive services: additional higher energy allowance.

Existing law establishes the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, administered by the State Department of Social Services and counties, under which qualified aged, blind, and disabled persons are provided with services in order to permit them to remain in their own homes.

Existing law, the Public Utilities Act, requires the Public Utilities Commission to designate a baseline quantity of electricity and gas necessary for a significant portion of the reasonable energy needs of the average residential customer, and to establish a higher energy allowance above the baseline for residential customers with specified medical needs, including those residential customers dependent on life-support equipment.

This bill would authorize a county welfare department to use materials provided by an electrical corporation that is serving the county to inform each applicant or recipient of benefits under the IHSS program that the applicant or recipient may be eligible to receive that higher energy allowance and any advanced notifications that are provided by a public utility when the public utility plans to deenergize portions of the electrical distribution system or in an emergency. The bill would also require the department to issue an all-county information notice informing counties of the importance of the dissemination of this information.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 12301.18 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

12301.18. (a) A county welfare department may use materials provided by an electrical corporation that is serving the county to inform each applicant or recipient of benefits under this article that the applicant or recipient may be eligible to receive the additional higher energy allowance described in subdivision (c) of Section 739 of the Public Utilities Code and that they may also be eligible to register with their electrical corporation to receive any advanced notifications that are provided by a public utility when the public utility plans to deenergize portions of the electrical distribution system or in an emergency.

(b) For purposes of this section, "materials" means information that is on an internet website or printed, or both.

(c) Within 180 days of the enactment of this section, the department shall issue an all-county information notice informing counties of the enactment of this section and the importance of the dissemination of the information set forth in subdivision (a) to applicants for benefits under this article.