

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 48th Legislature (2001)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
SENATE BILL 194

By: Easley

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

An Act relating to oil and gas; creating the Helping Oklahomans Pay for Energy (HOPE) Act; providing short title; stating legislative intent; creating HOPE Revolving Fund; stating purpose; providing for noncodification; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Helping Oklahomans Pay for Energy (HOPE) Act".

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

The State of Oklahoma has enjoyed a long partnership with its crude oil and natural gas producers, an industry that has worked diligently through difficult times and good times to provide the energy our state and nation requires. Both the State of Oklahoma and its energy producing partners prosper during times of strong prices for crude oil and natural gas. The year 2000 was one such time, especially the months of November and December when natural gas values more than doubled. This market-driven price increase brought renewed business activity to the natural gas exploration and production business and contributed significant new tax revenues to the state. However, the surge in the price of natural gas, coupled with the unfortunate timing of the most severely cold early-winter in state history, has also caused an immediate hardship for some

consumers. Many elderly, indigent and other Oklahomans living on fixed incomes have been faced with significant and unexpected increases in the cost of heating their homes. Now, the State of Oklahoma again calls on its energy partners within the oil and natural gas industry to assist in alleviating this crisis.

It is the intent of the Oklahoma Legislature to provide, pursuant to state law, an additional Twelve Million Dollars (\$12,000,000.00) in dedicated funding for the Low-Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) administered by the Department of Human Services. In recognition of our mutual goal of providing needed financial assistance to our state's most vulnerable citizens, the Oklahoma Legislature hereby creates pursuant to the provisions of this act, the Helping Oklahomans Pay for Energy (HOPE) Revolving Fund and encourages everyone, especially those leaders in the oil and gas industry, to make a tax deductible charitable contribution exclusively for LIHEAP assistance.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law not to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes reads as follows:

There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund for the Department of Human Services to be designated the "Help Oklahomans Pay for Energy (HOPE) Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of all monies designated for deposit thereto. All monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted and expended by the Department exclusively for making payments to provide financial assistance to residents of this state qualifying for the Low-Income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Expenditures from the fund shall be made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against claims filed as prescribed by law with the Director of State Finance for approval and payment.

SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby

declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

48-1-1143

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