

STATE OF NEW YORK

6484

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 14, 2025

Introduced by Sen. C. RYAN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications

AN ACT to amend the economic development law and the public service law, in relation to small business energy assistance and advocacy services

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative findings. The legislature hereby finds and
2 declares that rising energy costs present a significant barrier to the
3 economic viability of New York's small businesses, a crucial sector of
4 the state's economy. Small businesses can least afford the time and cost
5 associated with seeking opportunities to conserve energy, utilize energy
6 efficient products and processes and gain access to renewable sources of
7 energy. The viability of small businesses and the overall economic and
8 environmental status of New York state will be enhanced by the develop-
9 ment, expansion and promotion of accessible and affordable programs to
10 assist small businesses in energy conservation, energy efficiency, and
11 increased use of renewable resources, and by ensuring equitable treat-
12 ment of small businesses in the proceedings of energy-related regulatory
13 agencies.

14 The legislature hereby establishes a small business energy assistance
15 and advocacy services program as part of the division for small-business
16 within the empire state development corporation to assist small busi-
17 nesses in accessing energy conservation, energy efficiency and renewable
18 energy programs available through public and private sources, and to
19 advocate for the initiation and expansion of such programs and for equi-
20 table treatment of small businesses in regulatory proceedings related to
21 energy.

22 § 2. The economic development law is amended by adding a new section
23 138-a to read as follows:

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD11014-01-5

1 § 138-a. Small business energy assistance and advocacy services
2 program. 1. There is hereby established within the division for small-
3 business a small business energy assistance and advocacy services
4 program.

5 2. The small business energy assistance and advocacy services program,
6 directly and in conjunction with other divisions of the department and
7 with other agencies of the state, federal agencies or local governments,
8 shall:

9 a. solicit input from small businesses and from organizations repres-
10 enting small businesses, such as trade associations or other entities,
11 regarding the energy assistance needs of small businesses;

12 b. with such input and the assistance of the small-business advisory
13 board and other appropriate state agencies, identify issues relating to
14 energy availability, affordability and sustainability affecting small
15 businesses, increase small businesses' access to energy efficiency
16 grants and programs, and assist the advisory board and the division in
17 making recommendations for legislative, regulatory and programmatic
18 actions to address such issues. Such recommendations shall, at a mini-
19 imum, include:

20 (i) proposed changes to existing programs to better aid small busi-
21 nesses in making energy efficient improvements to existing properties;

22 (ii) proposed changes to other existing programs to suit the partic-
23 ular needs of small businesses; and

24 (iii) proposals for new programs specifically aimed at small busi-
25 nesses;

26 c. coordinate with entities including the New York state energy
27 research and development authority, the power authority of the state of
28 New York and other appropriate public utility authorities established
29 pursuant to article five of the public authorities law, the public
30 service commission, investor-owned utilities and other appropriate enti-
31 ties to facilitate and promote the participation of small businesses and
32 associations representing small businesses in the development and imple-
33 mentation of energy assistance programs;

34 d. provide guidance and recommendations to the New York state energy
35 research and development authority, the power authority of the state of
36 New York and other public utility authorities established pursuant to
37 article five of the public authorities law, the public service commis-
38 sion, investor-owned utilities and other entities regarding the develop-
39 ment and implementation of energy assistance programs and on the impact
40 of state energy policy on small businesses;

41 e. provide to small businesses information and materials on energy
42 assistance programs, cooperative fuel purchasing efforts and other
43 programs to maintain the affordability of energy, and provide access to
44 such information and materials on the department's website; and

45 f. refer small businesses to specialists for information and assist-
46 ance on affordable alternative technologies, process changes, products
47 and operational methods to achieve energy savings.

48 3. The small business energy assistance and advocacy services program
49 shall advocate before the public service commission and other state and
50 federal regulatory agencies for the adoption of appropriate regulations
51 providing for equitable treatment of small businesses in energy-related
52 policies, including but not limited to extending reasonable consumer
53 protections to small businesses in energy-related matters.

54 § 3. Section 71 of the public service law, as amended by chapter 521
55 of the laws of 2013, is amended to read as follows:

1 § 71. Complaints as to quality and price of gas and electricity;
2 investigation by commission; forms of complaints. Upon the complaint in
3 writing of the mayor of a city, the trustees of a village, the town
4 board of a town or the chief executive officer or the legislative body
5 of a county in which a person or corporation is authorized to manufac-
6 ture, convey, transport, sell or supply gas or electricity for heat,
7 light or power, or upon the complaint in writing of not less than twen-
8 ty-five customers or purchasers of such gas or electricity, or upon the
9 complaint in writing of the department of state or the division for
10 small-business, or upon a complaint of a gas corporation or electrical
11 corporation supplying or transmitting said gas or electricity, as to the
12 illuminating or heating power, purity or pressure or the rates, charges
13 or classifications of service of gas, the efficiency of the electric
14 incandescent lamp supply, the voltage of the current supplied for light,
15 heat or power, or the rates charged or classification of service of
16 electricity sold and delivered in such municipality, or as to the extent
17 or duration of a disruption in gas or electricity service, the commis-
18 sion shall investigate as to the cause for such complaint. When such
19 complaint is made, the commission may, by its agents, examiners and
20 inspectors, inspect the works, system, plant, devices, appliances and
21 methods used by such person or corporation in manufacturing, transmit-
22 ting and supplying such gas or electricity, and may examine or cause to
23 be examined the books and papers of such person, or corporation pertain-
24 ing to the manufacture, sale, transmitting and supplying of such gas or
25 electricity. The form and contents of complaints made as provided in
26 this section shall be prescribed by the commission. Such complaints
27 shall be signed by the officers, or by the customers, purchasers or
28 subscribers making them, who must add to their signatures their places
29 of residence, by street and number, if any. The commission shall publish
30 the form and instructions for completing the form on the commission's
31 website.

32 § 4. Section 84 of the public service law, as amended by section 49 of
33 part A of chapter 62 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as follows:

34 § 84. Complaints as to service and price of steam heat; investigation
35 by commission; forms of complaints. Upon the complaint in writing of the
36 mayor of the city, the trustees of a village or the town board of a town
37 in which a person or corporation is authorized to manufacture, sell or
38 supply steam for heat or power, or upon the complaint in writing of not
39 less than fifty customers or purchasers of such steam heat in cities of
40 the first or second class, or of not less than twenty-five in cities of
41 the third class, or of not less than ten elsewhere, or upon the
42 complaint in writing of the department of state or the division for
43 small-business, as to the price, pressure or efficiency of steam
44 supplied for heat or power, sold and delivered in such municipality, the
45 commission shall investigate as to the cause for such complaint. When
46 such complaint is made, the commission may, by its agents, examiners and
47 inspectors, inspect the work, system, plant, devices, appliances and
48 methods used by such person or corporation in manufacturing, transmit-
49 ting and supplying such steam, and may examine or cause to be examined
50 the books and papers of such person or corporation pertaining to the
51 manufacture, sale, transmitting and supplying of such steam. The form
52 and contents of complaints made as provided in this section shall be
53 prescribed by the commission. Such complaint shall be signed by the
54 officers, or by the customers, purchasers or subscribers making them,
55 who must add to their signatures their place of residence, by street and
56 number, if any.

1 § 5. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after
2 it shall have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amend-
3 ment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implemen-
4 tation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and
5 completed on or before such effective date.