



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

Low Income Energy Assistance Policy Advisory Council (PAC) Meeting Recording of Webex Meeting Held on January 28, 2021

Recording

Topic	Password
Policy Advisory Council (PAC) Webex Meeting-20210128 1900-1	No password

Attendance:

PAC Members: Kris White, Will County Center for Community Concerns; Staci Wilson, Illinois Municipal Electric Agency; Aimee Gendusa-English, Citizens Utility Board (CUB); Joan Howard, Illinois Commerce Commission; Ellen Rendos, Nicor Gas; Lorrie Walls, City of Chicago-Department of Family & Support Services; Jason Decker, Commonwealth Edison, Dalitso Sulamoyo, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission; Kimberly Bond (Proxy), Ameren; David Wortman, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

Guests: Anthony White, Ameren Illinois; Lauren Pashayan, Office of the Illinois Attorney General; Linda Rhodes, ComEd; Jim Agnew (Proxy), Illinois Commerce Commission; Kimberly Roberts, CEDA; Kim Campbell, Vistra Corp; Latoya Butler, CEDA; Manuel Alicea, CEDA; Eric Schrader, Peoples Gas/North Shore Gas; Allen Cherry, Low Income Utility Advocacy Project; Jennifer Marten, Nicor Gas; Abigail Miner, Office of the Illinois Attorney General; Barbara Richardson, Legal Aid Chicago; Martha Strawser, City of Rockford Human Services; Kathy Walk, C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity; Karen Lusson, National Consumer Law Center (NCLC); Mindy Browning, ERBA; Aarian Smith, ComEd; Julie DeSalvo; MidAmerican.

DCEO Staff: Ben Moore, Cassandra Vaughn, Jessica Becker, Wayne Hartel, Deirdre Coughlin, Leslie Ann Lesko, Mick Prince, Maria Gallardo, Janet Hawes-Davis; Kurt Verduin, Garrett Vaughn.

Meeting Synopsis:

- The LIHEAP Program Status report was provided by Leslie Ann Lesko.
 - A total of \$78,322,716 is being spent on behalf of 124,150 households receiving at least one LIHEAP benefit. See breakdown by LAA in the Program Status report.
 - In terms of application entry count, a total of 214,298 applications have been taken from 7/27-1/26. As we have discussed in the past, one of the biggest challenges has been receiving customer documentation needed to complete an application. Also, the LIHEAP Customer Inquiry portal, which now includes an upload function, is new to customers and there has been a learning curve as any new process has.
 - We met with the LAAs in December to discuss this and to offer assistance to LAAs that are struggling. We are trying to be as flexible as possible with customer documentation. For example, if a customer has been entered into LIHEAP.net in the past (regardless of the year) and received a benefit, the agency can use their SSN data for the system, and the customer doesn't need to provide proof.
 - In addition, LAAs are receiving documents through the customer inquiry portal, drop box, fax or taking self-certification and also allow the intake worker's affidavit while speaking with a customer.
 - In terms of income, documents from the last 30 days is the norm. Except for individuals who have SSI, SSA, they only have to provide their income documentation once/year.
 - OCA has also worked with our IT team and deployed new reports in LIHEAP.net to assist LAAs when a pending application or denied has documentation submitted. The end result is to reverse the status of the application.
 - The Help IL Families and the LIHEAP Hotline have been assisting CEDA with application intake via the phone. To date, a total of 8,030 applications have been taken since July 27. HIF started taking applications on 10/13.
 - As we have discussed previously, one of our biggest focus now is serving Undocumented IL residents with State funds (LIHEAP and PIPP). We deployed this change in LIHEAP.net in December and applicants who do not have an SSN but are IL residents of utilities/vendors that contribute to the State Supplemental Fund can be assisted by providing their ITIN (Individual Taxpayer ID Number). If the customer doesn't have either an SSN or an ITIN, the LAA could still serve the applicant by issuing a Special ID Number. [There are 252 applications entered in LIHEAP.net that contain an ITIN + 4 PIPP applications].
 - OCA is contemplating to **end the PY** on June 15, 2021 instead of June 30, which will give customers the rest of June to provide missing documentation. We are concerned with the larger LAAs and want to avoid the number of potential manual payments and OIM will need enough time to close LIHEAP.net and open the new PY. As a result, we are thinking we should say starting February 16th all LAAs have 45 days to bring applications to a final status. And then, starting May 1st LAAs have 30 days to bring applications to a final status. We will keep the stakeholders informed.
 - Promotion efforts- There was a press release from the Governor in mid-December that mentioned the Help IL Families initiative and announced LIHEAP is serving all households, regardless of immigration status. He also mentioned during one of his daily COVID

briefings. As a follow-up to this, we did an interview in Univisión Chicago on 12/30 and CBS on 1/13. In addition, DCEO has been including LIHEAP in FB and Twitter posts.

- During the PIPP Steering Committee meeting 2 weeks ago and previously, some concerns about RA were brought up about the current requirement that a disconnection notice is needed to receive an RA benefit. Customers are being encouraged to enter into DPAs by the utilities in order to pay off the big COVID-related arrearages. But by doing so, the customers get removed from the disconnect list and then lose the ability to receive an RA. OCA has some thoughts about this and we'd like to hear your input as well.
- As you may recall, OCA has waived these requirements since PY2020 (March) and is planning to continue doing so the rest of this PY and into the next year.
- OCA has discussed the current RA policy (where in order to receive RA customer must be disconnected or in imminent threat) internally and with LIHEAP Working Group members. The amount of RA is the minimum amount needed to help secure the energy service, up to \$1,000/year/household. Our position for now is to leave the policy as is because: 1- any changes in policy will affect LIHEAP.net and we currently don't have enough resources available to make system changes, 2- need further discussion to ensure we don't provide customers a perverse incentive by changing policy.
 - Would the utilities have a way to continue offering DPAs without removing the customer from the disconnect/imminent threat?
- The PIPP Program Status report was discussed by Maria Gallardo.
 - A total of \$29,445,416 is obligated annually on behalf of 29,246 customers enrolled in PIPP. Average PIPP benefit = \$1,007.
 - See breakdown by LAA enclosed.
 - The average benefit last year was \$969 (Last year, we were obligating annually a total of \$26,088,115 on behalf of 26,919 customers as of 1/16/2020).
 - As we discussed previously, OCA asked the LAAs to accept new PIPP customers beginning July 27 or at any time between July 28 and September 1, 2020; per funding availability by utility and county. CEDA started accepting new PIPP customers on Jan. 4th., based on their grant allocation per utilities. Applicants can contact to any of their Partner Intake Sites for a PIPP application.
 - New PIPP enrollment applications have been extended this year to March 31, 2021 instead of December 31.
 - LAAs will have time to process these new applications in STARS after March 31.
 - After April 1st, or after an LAA runs out of PIPP funding, all applicants will be offered the traditional LIHEAP DVP.
 - Some LAAs have stopped accepting new PIPP applicants, due to funding availability: (1) BCMW-Marion county; (2) CEFS, (3) IVEDC, (4) Kendall-Grundy-Kendall county, (5) Western Egyptian- all counties, except Monroe.

- Furnace Assistance is available to qualifying homeowners who have an approved LIHEAP benefit this Program Year, or who have been on active PIPP within the last 12 months. The last day for Furnace Assistance applications is April 30, 2021.
- David Wortman provided Energy Affordability Discussion updates.
- Aarian Smith provided the ComEd's Supplemental Arrearage Reduction Program (SARP) Update.
- Attached is the January 28, 2021 meeting recording transcript for further discussion.

**Policy Advisory Council (PAC) Webex Meeting Transcript
January 28, 2021**

WEBVTT

1

00:00:01.080 --> 00:00:05.248

And your association, uh, so that we can, uh.

2

00:00:05.248 --> 00:00:10.648

Take roll call that our take attendance that way. So we know who's here.

3

00:00:10.648 --> 00:00:20.820

I'll start off by reminding everyone that this meeting is being recorded. In fact, I think I already saw that pop up so we are recording this meeting.

4

00:00:21.989 --> 00:00:25.320

Uh, we have everyone put on mute right now.

5

00:00:25.320 --> 00:00:31.230

While we give our presentations later on, there's going to be discussion and we will.

6

00:00:31.230 --> 00:00:38.579

Uh, allow people to take them out selves off of mute to have discussion but, uh, for now, we have everyone on mute.

7

00:00:38.579 --> 00:00:42.060

So, I think that's, uh, all of that.

8

00:00:42.060 --> 00:00:49.140

Welcome to the 1st pack meeting of the new year. The January 2008 pack meeting.

9

00:00:51.149 --> 00:00:57.390

So, with that, I think we're ready to go, um, the meeting minutes.

10

00:01:00.390 --> 00:01:13.855

Um, from the last meeting were sent out, there were 2 documents that were attached to this invitation. Uh, 1 had a link to the video of the meeting and the 2nd was a transcript.

11

00:01:14.275 --> 00:01:27.355

So that's what we're using as meeting minutes. Anyone needs to see that the thing that I found out from looking at the transcript and going back and watching some of the meeting is that I say, uh, and, um, a lot I'm sorry about that. But, uh.

12

00:01:28.109 --> 00:01:31.980

We'll have to live with it, so.

13

00:01:31.980 --> 00:01:39.359

Uh, with that, I believe we'll move in to the pack discussion items. 1st item is the fiscal report.

14

00:01:39.359 --> 00:01:46.079

And been more is going to give that been I assume that you want the program status report displayed.

15

00:01:49.319 --> 00:01:54.540

Yes, David please if he can do that. Thanks.

16

00:01:54.540 --> 00:02:01.109

So that the 2nd page, if you can get to the 2nd page.

17

00:02:01.109 --> 00:02:05.400

Great thanks.

18

00:02:05.400 --> 00:02:11.759

Okay, so distributed in the, the documents for the meeting was this fiscal overview.

19

00:02:11.759 --> 00:02:17.009

And I'll try to watch the David.

20

00:02:18.835 --> 00:02:32.935

For the program year, we have approximately 44.7M available within grantees, and to date they have spent to approximately 8.3M. So there still is 36.4M available for the rest of the program year that runs.

21

00:02:37.590 --> 00:02:46.199

For the daily grant, it runs through the end of this June before the and date grants. They do run through September.

22

00:02:46.199 --> 00:02:50.669

So there is about 9 months left for those, those funds.

23

00:02:50.669 --> 00:02:58.139

Nick principle discuss the progress this year and just programmatic report regarding weather station.

24

00:02:59.189 --> 00:03:07.020

I really don't have anything else on from the fiscal standpoint, except for the expenditures year to date.

25

00:03:08.604 --> 00:03:21.504

Or I haven't broken out there by the different funding sources. We do have the top 2 or the 2 concurrent grants that we have out.

26

00:03:22.014 --> 00:03:23.875

So, for the the.

27

00:03:24.659 --> 00:03:38.340

22 2, 4 rent, which is the fiscal year 2000 grant we had about 81.2M. That was effectively the carry over. That is this is the 2nd year of that series. So.

28

00:03:38.340 --> 00:03:42.960

81.2 is what was still available in that grant.

29

00:03:42.960 --> 00:03:46.050

About 39.7.

30

00:03:46.050 --> 00:03:51.419

This has been extended so far so there's still is about 41.4M left.

31

00:03:51.419 --> 00:03:55.349

In the 20 heap grant.

32

00:03:55.349 --> 00:04:01.560

And those grants do expire at the end of June of this year.

33

00:04:02.155 --> 00:04:11.365

And then the f y21 grant, which is the number is the 21, 2, 2, 4 grant we have not put all those funds out.

34

00:04:11.365 --> 00:04:25.165

There are some funding still available for the next program year, but to date, we've issued a 44.5M in funding for that program only about 1.2M of that has been extended. That leaves about 43.2. no, I will clarify that.

35

00:04:30.449 --> 00:04:39.353

In our system we have it arranged, so that the oldest grant, which is the 20 grant, those funds get extended 1st by grantee.

36

00:04:39.353 --> 00:04:51.593

So, the low amount of expenditures in FY, 21 grant is due to the fact that many of the agencies are still spending the funding. That is still available from the f y20 grant.

37

00:04:54.718 --> 00:05:02.999

Then the 200274 is the, that cares the stimulus.

38

00:05:20.728 --> 00:05:28.889

So, in our life, that system, we have both f, y20 and the cares money is.

39

00:05:28.889 --> 00:05:33.809

Spent before the 21 fiscal year money, so.

40

00:05:33.809 --> 00:05:39.899

Um, there isn't a whole lot of the character left, which is, which is good.

41

00:05:39.899 --> 00:05:44.459

And then for the state grant, which is the last funding source.

42

00:05:44.459 --> 00:05:59.038

We haven't broken out there by the or the, the regular heat program, which is the, and the R. A. and then the hip is separate. So, cumulatively there's approximately 770.2000.

43

00:05:59.038 --> 00:06:06.689

That we have available out in that fund for the program to date about 2009.8 has been extended.

44

00:06:06.689 --> 00:06:13.858

Leading about 40.5M, as you can see the majority of that spending is in the pit program.

45

00:06:15.473 --> 00:06:29.064

Because the way like dot net, we have that set up our, our system is to spend the 1st so that we begin any unspent funds at the end of the grant period has to be will return to.

46

00:06:30.149 --> 00:06:40.978

So that's why the low spending on the V. P. and the, which is from the traditional my heat program. And the majority of that is in almost 30M that's been obligated for PIP.

47

00:06:43.108 --> 00:06:57.983

So, just in total for likey currently, we have about 230.8M available for the grantees and about almost 94M has been expended. So we do still have in total with all the funds about 136.9M still available for this program. Here.

48

00:07:04.499 --> 00:07:11.699

So, are there any questions on the budgets and expenditures for like, keeping.

49

00:07:15.149 --> 00:07:18.149

Hi, this is Karen lesson. Can you hear me.

50

00:07:18.149 --> 00:07:23.369

Yes, yes, Kerry, I just did 1 quick question. So is it correct then that.

51

00:07:23.369 --> 00:07:30.718

The 2 pots of money that don't roll over at the end of this fiscal year are.

52

00:07:30.718 --> 00:07:35.038

The grant, which is that 41.?

53

00:07:35.038 --> 00:07:46.288

For balance as well as the cares money the 11.5, those are the 2 paths that if not used, don't roll over.

54

00:07:46.288 --> 00:07:57.178

Correct for so this is Abbey in the office so to follow up on karen's question, then what happens to that grand money if it is on spent.

55

00:07:57.178 --> 00:08:01.439

So, if it is unspent, we have to return it to to.

56

00:08:01.439 --> 00:08:07.649

Do you have any idea about whether or not you're anticipating having to return any funds.

57

00:08:08.124 --> 00:08:22.343

I, I don't at this point, because we, we, the way our system is designed, that utilizes those funds. 1st, especially if the spring time April 1st, shut offs are.

58

00:08:22.709 --> 00:08:28.619

What we anticipate, then I can't imagine that those those available dollars would not be spent.

59

00:08:28.619 --> 00:08:41.729

Okay, okay. Would that even though right? Even before that I mean, it's possible that the carriers money may be gone by that. Okay. Yeah. That's a good point. Thank you. Sure.

60

00:08:41.729 --> 00:08:47.849

Yeah, I just I want to let everyone know that we are watching this very closely. Uh, we're, we've had a.

61

00:08:47.849 --> 00:08:51.688

A meeting in December with the local agencies.

62

00:08:51.688 --> 00:08:58.528

And we'll likely be holding 1 here in the next a week or 2 to go over our spend rate.

63

00:08:58.528 --> 00:09:04.828

And try to project out where we're going to end up. So this is something that we've watched.

64

00:09:04.828 --> 00:09:11.578

Yes, save it. Fun. Discourage. Yeah go ahead.

65

00:09:12.264 --> 00:09:26.663

I had a quick question about the 2nd or 3rd page of the report where you break it down by utility company. Actually it's going to cover that next. Oh, there aren't any other. That's fine. But if there aren't any other questions on the other 1 go ahead.

66

00:09:26.663 --> 00:09:39.354

And move on and we can certainly take questions on the whole book. Both topics. This last page of the report is a breakout of the state heap funding.

67

00:09:39.744 --> 00:09:47.423

That's been extended this year by utility. And so I haven't broken down. The top section is like, dot net.

68

00:09:47.423 --> 00:10:01.553

Which is the traditional funding that's the 300000 then the 2nd, excuse me the 2nd section is the pit spending, which is 15.76. so I do have it broken down by utility as far as the.

69

00:10:05.339 --> 00:10:19.553

They're registered accepted, which means, essentially benefits that have been rendered. So 1 clarification I want to make is, if you see, the PIP expenditure is only 15.7, whereas on the previous page, I believe it was 9002000.

70

00:10:19.553 --> 00:10:34.524

the difference there is that on this initial on the top report, those are obligation. So when a customer, enrolls in Pip, we obligate funds their monthly state benefit through the end of the state fiscal year, which is the end of June.

71

00:10:34.524 --> 00:10:45.594

So that's the 9002000. so, we anticipate that once the program year is done, we will have issued that much in in benefits. The 15.7 is actual payments made. So each month that the utilities Sunday.

72

00:10:53.548 --> 00:11:07.823

A pledge and invoice essential. This thing here are the enrolled customers that you that the state is going to make benefit payments for that. 15.7 represents the, those payments from the beginning of the program too.

73

00:11:07.823 --> 00:11:10.224

So I just wanted to clarify that difference.

74

00:11:11.369 --> 00:11:16.528

So, Amy had you had a question on this, this report.

75

00:11:16.528 --> 00:11:19.948

I did, but I, I, I.

76

00:11:19.948 --> 00:11:29.543

I formulated the question yesterday, and now that I look at it, I see that. It was not a question worth asking. I figured out the answer instead. I have a new question.

77

00:11:29.933 --> 00:11:40.283

I'm just curious why the nicor Pip pledges are so much lower than the rest of the utilities. Is it always like that? Or is that an anomaly?

78

00:11:40.798 --> 00:11:47.639

I don't remember ever seeing nicor pit numbers being below a 1M like that.

79

00:11:49.139 --> 00:11:55.889

That's a good question. And I'm, I'm not sure without looking back at the at the previous reports.

80

00:11:55.889 --> 00:12:06.178

I want to have to look into that. Honestly, I don't know if the staff have any ideas, but I don't.

81

00:12:06.178 --> 00:12:10.469

I apologize thanks.

82

00:12:19.469 --> 00:12:22.649

Yeah, is that everything then.

83

00:12:22.649 --> 00:12:28.198

Yes, and are there any other questions for Ben? Let's see.

84

00:12:30.894 --> 00:12:39.443

Karen has something in the chat has made any plans for alternative ways to get the money to customers in light of the difficult remote patient process,

85

00:12:40.043 --> 00:12:40.703

for example,

86

00:12:40.703 --> 00:12:51.653

could amounts be applied to a customer accounts that have already been deemed eligible during this program year so the answer to the 1st question is that.

87

00:12:52.918 --> 00:13:04.344

We have, uh, we are having ongoing conversations with agencies, uh, about the difficulty of the remote application process.

88

00:13:04.734 --> 00:13:10.884

Uh, that's the the meeting that will be occurring in the next couple of weeks will be, uh, we've done a.

89

00:13:11.219 --> 00:13:14.369

What I would call benchmarking to show.

90

00:13:14.724 --> 00:13:29.634

Agencies how they're doing, according to the state average, and we'll be talking to different agencies about how they are handling it to see if we can come up with best management practices to try to improve those processes. So, we are doing that.

91

00:13:30.203 --> 00:13:44.964

The 2nd, I talking about amounts being applied to customer accounts. I think that would be. I think what you're asking about is what we call a supplemental and it's something that we're considering.

92

00:13:45.594 --> 00:13:55.764

But we're, we're still looking at our spend rate and where we think we're going to end. So, I think it's too early for us to say for certain, you know.

93

00:13:56.129 --> 00:14:05.009

W, W, we're still looking at where we're at, uh, in the year. Uh, you know, we know that there's going to be a large demand.

94

00:14:05.009 --> 00:14:08.369

Uh, come after the moratorium.

95

00:14:08.369 --> 00:14:18.269

Comes off, so we're still a ways away from making that decision, but if that if we get to that point, we'll be we'll be.

96

00:14:18.269 --> 00:14:23.339

Expressing that publicly, will that people know.

97

00:14:24.418 --> 00:14:34.229

And could we increase the cap for spring? I think we're going to have an R, a conversation here later in the meeting. So I, I think Amy will.

98

00:14:34.229 --> 00:14:39.448

Uh, we'll wait and talk about that when we have a discussion a little later on.

99

00:14:39.448 --> 00:14:45.538

So, uh, if I go back to the agenda.

100

00:14:47.219 --> 00:14:50.639

I think the next item is a.

101

00:14:50.639 --> 00:14:55.318

Mick on the report, make.

102

00:14:55.318 --> 00:14:59.759

Thanks, David. Um, can you scroll up to the.

103

00:14:59.759 --> 00:15:03.208

1st page of this there you go.

104

00:15:03.208 --> 00:15:15.778

So, to date in the program year, we've done close to 1500 units, and it looks like we've got almost 950 and work order, print status.

105

00:15:15.778 --> 00:15:25.198

We're, we're ahead of our pace, uh, from last year, considerably on on unit count.

106

00:15:25.198 --> 00:15:33.599

I'm really impressed with with the, the network achieving these numbers and and.

107

00:15:34.163 --> 00:15:38.724

This time, so I think they're doing a great job.

108

00:15:39.864 --> 00:15:52.793

I don't think that the numbers in that been represented I don't think the weather works numbers and have caught up with 1 another yet because our unit count is is looking pretty good.

109

00:15:53.214 --> 00:15:58.494

But the spend that, that then showed it, it doesn't match right now.

110

00:15:58.494 --> 00:16:11.274

So I think we need to wait and see, uh, hopefully by the next pack meeting things look more normal as far as our average cost per unit and our, our expenditures.

111

00:16:12.749 --> 00:16:19.589

Double check yeah. Yeah. I just wanted to chime in. This is done that just to.

112

00:16:19.589 --> 00:16:33.774

To the group that there is different sources, I get the expenditures from our grantee reporting system, which is our official accounting system more the grantees report their cost in order to get reimbursement for the grant and the.

113

00:16:35.183 --> 00:16:49.283

Homes weather rise, and it gets from our whether it works system. And, like you said, there is a lag because they're the timing of the grantees reporting their costs and receiving their cash. Reimbursement is not always in line with when they show a home finalized on what it works.

114

00:16:49.283 --> 00:16:54.563

So I just wanted to give a little clarification on what? That timing differences. Nick yeah. No, thank you. Ben.

115

00:16:54.989 --> 00:17:07.439

Sure, but but at any rate, I'm, I'm definitely excited that we're, we're as many homes as as we are right now and things are really, really tough. Uh.

116

00:17:07.439 --> 00:17:13.078

Uh, for the, the local agencies at this time, so I'm proud of the work that they're.

117

00:17:13.078 --> 00:17:19.798

Are doing, um, we had a question come in yesterday. I think it was.

118

00:17:19.798 --> 00:17:24.959

Was it Amy asked about solar and and.

119

00:17:24.959 --> 00:17:39.479

Um, there was a, just recently there was Pre authorization, and I'll just give a quick update about some of the changes that are going to be part of the program.

120

00:17:39.479 --> 00:17:42.628

They've increased annual.

121

00:17:42.628 --> 00:17:46.439

Funding nationwide by about 30M dollars.

122

00:17:46.439 --> 00:17:52.138

So, we'll be we'll be seeing a slight increase, Karen, Illinois, and funding.

123

00:17:52.138 --> 00:17:56.098

There's a change to the admin levels.

124

00:17:56.098 --> 00:18:00.269

For the overall award it's going up from.

125

00:18:00.269 --> 00:18:05.009

10 to 15%, um.

126

00:18:05.009 --> 00:18:18.868

The date this is a big 1 in the past. There was a static date of September 30th 1994. any homes done after that date could not be re.

127

00:18:18.868 --> 00:18:22.499

Um, they're, they're changing policy to a 15.

128

00:18:22.499 --> 00:18:25.739

Year rolling date.

129

00:18:25.739 --> 00:18:34.078

So, 15 years after services were completed for a client at a household, or a particular home, that home would be.

130

00:18:34.078 --> 00:18:37.229

Eligible again at 15 years.

131

00:18:37.229 --> 00:18:40.528

That's a big change. Um.

132

00:18:40.528 --> 00:18:44.098

For us, there was some language added.

133

00:18:44.098 --> 00:18:55.259

That they changed it from technologies to renewable technologies and the reauthorization. I think it was just.

134

00:18:55.259 --> 00:19:05.578

Clarifying that renewable technologies, or retrofits were an acceptable retrofit. Uh, we're still waiting for.

135

00:19:05.578 --> 00:19:09.358

We to provide guidance on.

136

00:19:09.358 --> 00:19:20.759

On the allowable retrofits I'm sure solar is going to be a part of that in the future, but we, we don't have specifics yet.

137

00:19:21.868 --> 00:19:26.489

And and another change in the reauthorization was.

138

00:19:26.489 --> 00:19:32.368

We can now account for non energy benefits in our calculations.

139

00:19:32.368 --> 00:19:45.088

A couple things that come to mind, we can claim water savings on a water conservation measure. Now in the past, we only claim the energy savings for that.

140

00:19:45.088 --> 00:19:51.598

And I think they're going to somehow attribute to savings to our health and safety measures.

141

00:19:51.598 --> 00:19:55.318

So that's a big change, but again, we're waiting for.

142

00:19:55.318 --> 00:20:01.019

Clarification from on on how we calculate those savings.

143

00:20:02.398 --> 00:20:06.628

That's really all I have for the reauthorization updates.

144

00:20:06.628 --> 00:20:14.338

Anybody have any questions on on that going once.

145

00:20:14.338 --> 00:20:14.788

Nope,

146

00:20:16.193 --> 00:20:17.544

the other thing we're working on,

147

00:20:17.544 --> 00:20:22.703

we're continuing to work on on replacing the weather work system and,

148

00:20:22.703 --> 00:20:22.913

uh,

149

00:20:23.453 --> 00:20:23.723

we're,

150

00:20:23.723 --> 00:20:25.884

we're trying to work with a vendor now to,

151

00:20:25.884 --> 00:20:26.213

uh,

152

00:20:26.394 --> 00:20:31.104

to get a scope of work and potentially enter into a contract.

153

00:20:31.979 --> 00:20:37.019

For a full system rebuilt, so we're excited about that as well.

154

00:20:38.308 --> 00:20:42.749

Nobody has any questions. That's that's all. I have David.

155

00:20:42.749 --> 00:20:46.949

All right Thank you Mick.

156

00:20:46.949 --> 00:20:50.038

Uh.

157

00:20:50.038 --> 00:20:59.219

It doesn't look like we have any other questions coming in, so we will move on to the next item, which is a lie. He program status update.

158

00:20:59.219 --> 00:21:03.328

Hi.

159

00:21:03.328 --> 00:21:09.719

Excuse me? Hi. Good afternoon. Everyone Thank you for joining us today.

160

00:21:09.719 --> 00:21:18.028

The beginning of the program status update, I'll tell you that approximately 78.3000.

161

00:21:18.028 --> 00:21:24.419

Is being spent on behalf of 124150 household.

162

00:21:24.419 --> 00:21:29.368

And those are households receiving at least 1 light E, benefit.

163

00:21:29.368 --> 00:21:32.878

Please see the breakdown.

164

00:21:32.878 --> 00:21:36.449

By a, in the program status report.

165

00:21:36.449 --> 00:21:44.308

In terms of application entry count a total of 214298.

166

00:21:44.308 --> 00:21:54.209

Applications have been entered between July, 27th and January, 26.

167

00:21:54.209 --> 00:22:02.608

As we have discussed in the past 1 of the biggest challenges has been receiving customer documentation.

168

00:22:02.608 --> 00:22:05.729

Needed to complete the application.

169

00:22:05.729 --> 00:22:09.689

Also, the customer inquiry portal.

170

00:22:09.689 --> 00:22:18.628

Which now includes an upload function is new to customers, and there has been a learning curve.

171

00:22:18.628 --> 00:22:26.128

And we continue to work with all the agencies on trying to overcome.

172

00:22:26.128 --> 00:22:34.709

Any issues around that and offer as many choices as possible to customers to get their applications finished.

173

00:22:34.709 --> 00:22:47.548

We met, excuse me we met with the in December to discuss this problem and to offer assistance to any that are struggling.

174

00:22:47.548 --> 00:22:52.138

Uh, we are trying to be as flexible as possible with customer documentation.

175

00:22:52.138 --> 00:22:57.778

For example, if a customer has been entered into that in the past.

176

00:22:57.778 --> 00:23:11.993

Regardless of the year and receive the benefit, the agency can use their social security number of data for the system and they don't have to provide a copy of their proof of social security number.

177

00:23:13.348 --> 00:23:21.028

Like, you've got net system does require a 9 digit number, and we do keep track of the.

178

00:23:21.028 --> 00:23:25.348

We do add use social security number because it's a unique number.

179

00:23:25.348 --> 00:23:36.058

That's associate with customers and it is a way that we can track that. They've only receive 1 1.

180

00:23:36.058 --> 00:23:45.719

Some amount of are possible and and they got their share basically and then 1 of the.

181

00:23:45.719 --> 00:23:52.469

Biggest focus that we have now is also to serve that quote, unquote document.

182

00:23:52.469 --> 00:23:57.179

Illinois residents with state funds in both and tip.

183

00:23:57.179 --> 00:24:01.679

We deployed this change and might get that that in December.

184

00:24:01.679 --> 00:24:07.439

And applicants who don't have a social security number, but they are Illinois residents.

185

00:24:07.439 --> 00:24:20.759

And customers of utilities and vendors that contribute to the state supplemental fund, they can be assisted if they have an individual taxpayer identification number.

186

00:24:20.759 --> 00:24:24.328

Also called an icon or an. I. T. I. N.

187

00:24:24.804 --> 00:24:29.874

And if the person does not have a social security number or an item,

188

00:24:30.473 --> 00:24:45.233

we do have a set of special identification numbers that each agency can issue to be able to enter these individuals and get help for them.

189

00:24:47.368 --> 00:24:50.489

So, let's see, I'm sorry, I can.

190

00:24:57.834 --> 00:25:12.413

You have any, do you have any stats or numbers for how many undocumented households you've assisted so far? I know you provided some at an earlier meeting I thought you might have an update. Yeah, you're right.

191

00:25:12.442 --> 00:25:17.124

Right, well, so far for, like, there are 252 applications that are.

192

00:25:20.368 --> 00:25:25.858

That have been entered and then in tip, we have 4.

193

00:25:25.858 --> 00:25:30.148

Applications, so if there's a little bit of a.

194

00:25:30.473 --> 00:25:44.844

Maybe a slow the word is getting out for, but as, you know, Amy from cab, you are trying to help get the word out to citizens in the States. And we have also had some promotion effort.

195

00:25:46.163 --> 00:25:50.304

There was a press release from the governor in December.

196

00:25:50.699 --> 00:25:58.528

And that mentioned to help Illinois family's initiative and announce that we're serving all households.

197

00:25:58.528 --> 00:26:01.618

Regardless of immigration status.

198

00:26:01.618 --> 00:26:08.548

The governor had also mentioned this during 1 of his daily briefings.

199

00:26:08.548 --> 00:26:12.959

And as a follow up Maria diago a.

200

00:26:12.959 --> 00:26:22.949

Was interviewed on Univision, Chicago on December 30th and David Portman had a part of a small piece on CBS.

201

00:26:22.949 --> 00:26:28.648

In January, 13, and also.

202

00:26:28.648 --> 00:26:35.818

The director's office they've been, including and in Facebook and Twitter posts.

203

00:26:38.098 --> 00:26:41.338

So, we're trying to get the word out.

204

00:26:45.659 --> 00:26:53.969

Oh, I'm sorry, I lost my place here and as you're counting, how many times I say, or? It's probably.

205

00:26:53.969 --> 00:27:00.628

A lot, it's a common thing that people have to overcome in their public speaking.

206

00:27:00.628 --> 00:27:04.019

So, let's see here.

207

00:27:04.019 --> 00:27:15.689

So, as we said, Las are also receiving documents through the customer inquiry portal, drop box, boxing.

208

00:27:15.689 --> 00:27:22.979

Or they are self certifying with intake worker affidavits, or income affidavits.

209

00:27:22.979 --> 00:27:26.878

So, we are trying to really be flexible and.

210

00:27:26.878 --> 00:27:35.909

Provide the opportunity for as many people as possible as easy as possible to get their application through.

211

00:27:36.989 --> 00:27:51.269

Excuse me has also worked with our I. T team, and we deployed some new reports and Mike has got met to assist the holidays.

212

00:27:51.269 --> 00:27:56.578

When they have pending applications or denied applications that have a document uploaded.

213

00:27:56.578 --> 00:28:07.828

The end result is to prompt follow up with the applicant and to hopefully reverse the status of a denied application. The agencies have that.

214

00:28:07.828 --> 00:28:16.108

Option 90 days from application date to be able to overturn a denial and we are.

215

00:28:16.108 --> 00:28:19.588

Currently investigating the possibility of.

216

00:28:19.588 --> 00:28:26.398

Extending that so that another way to help.

217

00:28:26.398 --> 00:28:30.659

Families be approved if they're eligible.

218

00:28:32.699 --> 00:28:46.253

Um, the Illinois, the health, Illinois families and hotline, they've been assisting fita Cook county with taking applications by phone to date. A total of 8030 applications have been taken since July 27.

219

00:28:48.358 --> 00:28:56.338

And the helping families began helping with good county on October 13.

220

00:28:59.939 --> 00:29:04.019

Oh, is contemplating.

221

00:29:04.019 --> 00:29:15.328

Ending the program here on June 15th, instead of June 30, which will give customers the rest of June to provide missing documentation.

222

00:29:15.328 --> 00:29:19.348

We're concerned with larger that want to avoid.

223

00:29:19.348 --> 00:29:23.544

The number of potential manual payments,

224

00:29:23.544 --> 00:29:32.874

because they weren't able to process the documents on time that they've received and also our office of information management,

225

00:29:33.503 --> 00:29:36.564

they need enough time to close out.

226

00:29:36.953 --> 00:29:37.253

My.

227

00:29:37.798 --> 00:29:44.189

Dot net and open a new program here. So we're thinking starting.

228

00:29:44.189 --> 00:29:47.999

Any applications take on February.

229

00:29:48.804 --> 00:29:49.163
6th,

230

00:29:49.163 --> 00:29:52.284
through the end of April,

231

00:29:52.314 --> 00:29:59.273
the agencies would have 45 days to bring the application to a final
status and then starting May 1st,

232

00:29:59.273 --> 00:30:05.064
we would like agencies to be able to be back into the 30 day timeframe.

233

00:30:05.064 --> 00:30:07.973
And we hope with easing into this.

234

00:30:09.118 --> 00:30:14.308
That it will allow that to be such a huge.

235

00:30:14.308 --> 00:30:23.068
Rush at the hand, in a backlog and struggling pieces of documentation
that have to be matched up.

236

00:30:23.068 --> 00:30:32.608
And so forth and so on. So I will pause now and ask if anybody has any
other questions.

237

00:30:33.868 --> 00:30:41.909
Of the things that I have just spoken about, and not looking at the chat.
So I don't know.

238

00:30:41.909 --> 00:30:48.088
Okay, I see. So, Leslie and this is Abby in the office. I have a
question.

239

00:30:48.088 --> 00:30:55.528
That help Illinois family's hotline who's staffing that is that new hires
that were hired just to.

240

00:30:55.528 --> 00:30:59.278
Stef a hotline or other folks that are staffing that.

241

00:30:59.278 --> 00:31:10.409

No, it's, uh, I'll take that Leslie and it's a contract. It was an emergency contract that we did, uh, last summer. Uh, that's for this.

242

00:31:10.409 --> 00:31:15.689

Fiscal year program here. Okay. With a call center, got it. Thank you.

243

00:31:15.689 --> 00:31:23.459

Yeah, so we've been very happy with their services so it's worked out very well.

244

00:31:24.778 --> 00:31:31.318

Okay that I will move on to reconnection assistance as you may recall.

245

00:31:31.318 --> 00:31:34.618

Last program year and all of this.

246

00:31:34.618 --> 00:31:38.098

Program year we waived the.

247

00:31:38.098 --> 00:31:42.868

The good faith effort and the.

248

00:31:42.868 --> 00:31:48.298

Excuse me, let me start back again, starting last March.

249

00:31:48.298 --> 00:31:57.989

And retroactively all last program year, the 75 dollar good faith effort that had been our policy for many years. We waived that and continuing.

250

00:31:57.989 --> 00:32:03.419

This entire program here we also are not having the 75 days.

251

00:32:03.419 --> 00:32:07.318

75 dollars excuse me? Good faith effort.

252

00:32:07.913 --> 00:32:15.804

And we anticipate keeping that policy all of next year that we will not require the 75 dollar good faith effort payment.

253

00:32:15.834 --> 00:32:23.784

In addition to that this program year, starting July 27th we have also waved what's called the CPR or the.

254

00:32:26.183 --> 00:32:40.763

Customer payment responsibility, we are releasing the benefits regardless of connection status. So as long as the household is eligible, they're getting the full and.

255

00:32:42.088 --> 00:32:53.098

If certain other requirements are met, then it will move into the pot of money and the customer would get some are a benefits.

256

00:32:53.098 --> 00:32:57.959

During the steering committee 2 weeks ago.

257

00:32:57.959 --> 00:33:07.769

And previously, there were some concerns brought up about the current requirement that a disconnection notice if needed to receive and benefit.

258

00:33:07.769 --> 00:33:12.959

Customers are being encouraged to enter into deferred payment.

259

00:33:12.959 --> 00:33:16.648

Buy utilities in order to pay off.

260

00:33:16.648 --> 00:33:26.669

Career goals, but then, by doing, so it takes them out of the disconnect status and then that does sometimes.

261

00:33:26.933 --> 00:33:41.663

Have an effect on their ability to be able to receive a reconnection assistance been there are some manual processes that utilities and Eliza can work through together. But that hasn't been.

262

00:33:41.693 --> 00:33:43.614

There just doesn't seem to be enough staff.

263

00:33:44.098 --> 00:33:53.548

All around to be able to do that a lot. We, we have some thoughts about this and we'd like to hear your input.

264

00:33:53.548 --> 00:34:04.288

As well, I've already seen something about increasing the maximum R. A.

265

00:34:04.288 --> 00:34:08.699

For the spring I.

266

00:34:08.699 --> 00:34:12.804

I don't know that that was 1 of our considerations,

267

00:34:12.804 --> 00:34:13.643

but really,

268

00:34:13.643 --> 00:34:26.184

I think today we want just to hear all your suggestions and then we will put them back and we also have to look at the budget to make sure that.

269

00:34:26.458 --> 00:34:32.548

You know, we have the money, which we do.

270

00:34:32.548 --> 00:34:36.719

Who are traditional is now to the policies.

271

00:34:36.719 --> 00:34:50.878

I'll add a 1000 dollars. I didn't realize because number 1 changes and policy will affect like, you've got net and we currently don't have the resources for that. And number 2.

272

00:34:50.878 --> 00:34:55.168

The previous customers, this program.

273

00:34:55.168 --> 00:34:59.998

It would be difficult to serve them. They wouldn't have gotten a higher amount perhaps.

274

00:34:59.998 --> 00:35:10.768

And we just don't we want to avoid which David can talk more about the perverse incentives by changing policy.

275

00:35:14.728 --> 00:35:23.998

Lesley, and the question in there about, uh, are these changes documented. So, I mean, I.

276

00:35:23.998 --> 00:35:30.418

Um, I don't know that they're in our manual, but these have been, how have they been communicated to the age?

277

00:35:32.969 --> 00:35:36.028

The changes about.

278

00:35:36.028 --> 00:35:43.199

They are like the good faith effort and the CPR and the are a, any are changes.

279

00:35:43.199 --> 00:35:57.864

Yeah, they've been sent out they've been sent out in procedure letters and broadcast to the, to the agencies and our state plan.

280

00:35:58.318 --> 00:36:01.858

Which was shared with the pack.

281

00:36:01.858 --> 00:36:04.949

Before it was submitted.

282

00:36:04.949 --> 00:36:11.458

And I think those are the main procedure letters that we, that we issue.

283

00:36:11.458 --> 00:36:15.869

Right, I mean, the, that was the comment, like last.

284

00:36:15.869 --> 00:36:24.719

April or may right it was in March. Actually, we, we took me instructed agencies.

285

00:36:25.103 --> 00:36:39.443

We developed a process for them to begin waving it and then we also looked at all past applications last program here and out of all the applications that required

286

00:36:39.864 --> 00:36:40.733

the 75 dollars.

287

00:36:40.733 --> 00:36:52.313

Good those effort. All of them. If they were denied, they were all reversed, except for 142 applications and those people no longer had account active anymore.

288

00:36:52.313 --> 00:37:07.043

So we could not give them benefits. But that was a big job that our office of information technology helped us with last year. And also in conjunction with all the.

289

00:37:14.818 --> 00:37:21.028

Oh, hi, this is Karen. My may I ask a question.

290

00:37:21.983 --> 00:37:35.753

Yes, certainly so Leslie and I was, I'm wondering if you could provide a little more detail about how that work around process works when the agencies are able.

291

00:37:36.088 --> 00:37:43.768

To get in and work with the utilities to process a larger reconnection assistance grant.

292

00:37:43.768 --> 00:37:47.219

Even though say the customer is on a DPA.

293

00:37:47.219 --> 00:38:00.358

Um, clearly that, you know, in my view, that's something that, that we need to make happen and it needs to really be in place as of April 1st, when the moratorium lifts because right now.

294

00:38:00.358 --> 00:38:08.458

Customers are being encouraged to enter into deferred payment arrangements and, you know, it, it, it.

295

00:38:08.458 --> 00:38:21.653

You know, talk about an unintended consequence, you know, people try to do the right thing and enter into a payment agreement and then it ends up penalizing them in terms of getting the larger grant.

296

00:38:21.653 --> 00:38:27.744

So, I, I just wonder if you could maybe just spend a minute talking about how that process works.

297

00:38:27.840 --> 00:38:33.119

Whether or not the ceo's had any conversations with the utilities to sort of.

298

00:38:33.119 --> 00:38:38.250

Work together to make that happen as of April. 1st.

299

00:38:40.440 --> 00:38:48.300

This is the beginning of that conversation I do think I know that we're, we're concerned.

300

00:38:48.804 --> 00:38:51.594

We do understand the situation,

301

00:38:51.925 --> 00:39:04.405

but we're wondering if the utilities would have a way to continue offering deferred payment agreement without removing the customer from the disconnect,

302

00:39:04.405 --> 00:39:08.005

imminent disconnect threat that would in our.

303

00:39:08.280 --> 00:39:14.099

Mind be the easiest all around the best.

304

00:39:14.099 --> 00:39:24.960

Best way to be able to get the most reconnection assistance money out the door so that there's that comment. And then how does it work?

305

00:39:24.960 --> 00:39:33.389

When the so it's a manual process and the customer would have to.

306

00:39:33.389 --> 00:39:46.195

Apply for heat, and they would have to have a large bill and then the agency in conjunction with the utility, which is a manual process they would need to work.

307

00:39:46.224 --> 00:39:51.775

There is there's sort of like a back door to lie. He's not that.

308

00:39:52.199 --> 00:39:55.585

It requires searching user rights,

309

00:39:55.644 --> 00:40:09.655

and there's usually 1 person at every utility sometimes more than 1 that have access that could actually help with the reconnect amount or the outstanding balance.

310

00:40:10.110 --> 00:40:20.099

But that has to be done before they go into the deferred payment arrangement. So what has been done in the past is.

311

00:40:20.099 --> 00:40:23.639

They would work with.

312

00:40:23.639 --> 00:40:27.989

The agency and the utility would work together.

313

00:40:27.989 --> 00:40:33.210

Get as much of the life benefit as possible and then the remaining amount.

314

00:40:33.210 --> 00:40:39.449

Would be put into the deferred payment agreements and this is nothing new. That's just been.

315

00:40:39.449 --> 00:40:44.159

Available ever since, like, you've got started.

316

00:40:44.159 --> 00:40:48.599

But it's just that it's a manual process and so it's.

317

00:40:48.599 --> 00:41:00.210

Not, it's hard to offer on a wide scale, but I want to say Leslie and Jason Decker from commented in the chat, because he has an update on this.

318

00:41:01.105 --> 00:41:05.394

Hey, Leslie and Karen. Hey, this is something we're looking at on account that time.

319

00:41:05.394 --> 00:41:16.463

We actually just had a meeting about a week ago with Amy, English Amy, thank you for bringing it up and the recent discussions and I'm sorry, I'm getting some background noise here.

320

00:41:21.025 --> 00:41:34.405

That's much better. Yeah, so we met with a English with cub after bringing this up and Karen I know you had brought it up earlier. So we wanted to make sure we had a conversation to really understand what folks are seeing.

321

00:41:34.434 --> 00:41:37.704

We are looking at a technology change on the comment side.

322

00:41:38.039 --> 00:41:52.465

Uh, we have a request into our it team to implement a change. So we're going to work this. It, it is a priority on our side. It definitely is. In the best interest of our customers. It's in the best interest of the utilities. I just want to let, you know, it's something we're working on.

323

00:41:52.824 --> 00:41:59.545

We don't have timing, but we've prioritizes to try to get it on a fast track. And we'll share updates as we have available.

324

00:42:01.349 --> 00:42:04.650

Oh, that's good to know. Thank you.

325

00:42:06.570 --> 00:42:11.579

And Jason, do you have any idea that as to whether that would be.

326

00:42:11.579 --> 00:42:16.619

Available prior to, you know, by April 1st.

327

00:42:16.619 --> 00:42:21.960

Um, because it was my understanding too, that over the summer, I remember you, and I had a conversation.

328

00:42:21.960 --> 00:42:30.659

About making sure that people that we're entering into the longer 24 month. Dpas weren't inadvertently.

329

00:42:30.659 --> 00:42:42.000

You know, sort of being denied that larger benefit and I thought there was a workaround that comment did that sort of, you know, to Leslie and point.

330

00:42:42.000 --> 00:42:47.280

Um, you know, sort of Mark, the, the account.

331

00:42:47.280 --> 00:42:59.670

To ensure that agencies could give them the larger grant, but they would still not be disconnected and be able to turn to a DPA.

332

00:42:59.670 --> 00:43:05.760

Yeah, so on the 2 parts of that, Karen really, really would like this put in.

333

00:43:05.760 --> 00:43:15.420

April 1st, right. Um, coming out of the winter moritorium here, making sure that this is in place and to your point, right? Those customers who take action on their account.

334

00:43:15.420 --> 00:43:25.014

To contact the CSR, they get put into a DPA that they don't lose out on available assistance because they were proactive and did what the utility asked them for right?

335

00:43:25.465 --> 00:43:37.135

On the 2nd, piece of that we've been approaching a lot of this very manually on the comment side and doing our best to make sure we address it, but really feel this technology change is needed. So when an L.

336

00:43:37.135 --> 00:43:49.704

a pings com that and looks at the customer account, it will show that there's still inactive collections and eligible for reconnection assistance and we're also looking at it in a way.

337

00:43:50.514 --> 00:44:04.554

And if the customer who had called in and around a DPA that if they've received the reconnection assistance, and they had went on to a DPA, it would actually pay down or pay off that as well. Not just the outstanding balance. It wasn't an.

338

00:44:05.400 --> 00:44:18.269

And thanks, Jason, and can the other utilities addresses? I know Ameren system does allow this kind of.

339

00:44:18.269 --> 00:44:21.659

An easier.

340

00:44:21.659 --> 00:44:26.340

Transition then then the other utilities to to do.

341

00:44:26.340 --> 00:44:34.679

Exactly this is that right? And then also, I'm wondering about nicor and people's gas.

342

00:44:34.679 --> 00:44:38.400

They 2 are trying to figure out a workaround on this.

343

00:44:41.219 --> 00:44:49.590

And I, I don't mean to hijack the meeting, you know, if, if you need whatever the time is David, I want to respect that.

344

00:44:51.119 --> 00:44:59.489

No, Helen has said that, uh, she would like to so Allen, you should be able to come off mute and can you, can you hear me David?

345

00:44:59.489 --> 00:45:06.480

Okay, I agree. Karen natural gas would like to work on a solution.

346

00:45:06.480 --> 00:45:12.900

We work on on a limited basis doing that manual work around.

347

00:45:12.900 --> 00:45:20.159

But we need, and I'm very interested to hear what I'm trying to program.

348

00:45:20.159 --> 00:45:34.199

We would like to understand what flexibility we have, because we'd like to be able to do this on more of a wide scale that I think we've got a bunch of issues of the whole.

349

00:45:34.199 --> 00:45:37.500

The 24 month.

350

00:45:37.500 --> 00:45:40.739

That we've been encouraging people to get on.

351

00:45:40.739 --> 00:45:45.659

But also, you know, we have around the corner April. 1st.

352

00:45:45.659 --> 00:45:55.590

Does not send out disconnect notices to everyone who was eligible just that would be way too many on April. 1.

353

00:45:55.590 --> 00:46:02.309

And so we need some other work around so that while these customers going in get assistance.

354

00:46:02.309 --> 00:46:08.789

That they qualify for the larger funds.

355

00:46:08.789 --> 00:46:12.329

And the other thing that I'm very concerned about.

356

00:46:12.329 --> 00:46:17.639

Is and I think, I don't know anything, but.

357

00:46:17.639 --> 00:46:30.534

What, if we don't even send disconnect notices in April? I mean, there's a lot going on right now, based on the state of emergency we might not be allowed to send disconnect notices.

358

00:46:30.804 --> 00:46:34.195

And so again, people aren't going to be eligible for those funds.

359

00:46:34.764 --> 00:46:46.795

So, I do think more it's more important than ever that we spend some of these dollars and get people's balances down whether the utilities are cutting or not.

360

00:46:50.190 --> 00:47:04.405

So is interested in understanding what flex oh, these we have and trying to work around some program right now. It is very manual and it's it's really hard to do it on a large scale.

361

00:47:06.804 --> 00:47:20.155

And, Jen, you can correct me if I said, Jen Martin works a lot closer in the details, but I think I got it. Nope, you're good. Thanks, Ellen. This is Leslie.

362

00:47:20.155 --> 00:47:31.525

And again, I just wanted to say, I believe I know in the past, anyway, that utility had a group meeting periodically that you would have amongst yourselves.

363

00:47:31.914 --> 00:47:46.375

And I can say that whatever Ameren did with their coating last summer, we approved approved and it worked very well with ally. She dot net.

364

00:47:46.764 --> 00:47:56.784

And so, I don't know if you're doing your utility meeting with each other, you want to try to work something out and find out what am landed.

365

00:47:57.505 --> 00:48:09.025

And then, of course, I don't know, like you said, Allen might not be allowed to I don't know how your other little girls statutory requirements are going to fall into this.

366

00:48:09.684 --> 00:48:16.644

But we want to support to get the money out the door to the customers who needed the most.

367

00:48:20.065 --> 00:48:26.605

And then if there were no other questions for me on this topic, I would encourage you.

368

00:48:27.210 --> 00:48:35.219

If you have an afterthought, you can send an email to to myself.

369

00:48:35.219 --> 00:48:47.635

Bless land must go at Illinois dot Gov and share your thoughts if you're from a utility or an agency or wherever you're from. Let us know what you think.

370

00:48:47.635 --> 00:48:54.264

If you think you have some good ideas please share and we'll do our best.

371

00:48:54.570 --> 00:49:02.460

To help the customers and then I'll pass this on to Maria, who was going to give a update.

372

00:49:02.460 --> 00:49:11.070

Hey, there, this is Eric and can I just make a quick statement here on that before we change topics? Um.

373

00:49:11.070 --> 00:49:17.280

Carried out for a response from all the utilities. We have a concern about.

374

00:49:17.280 --> 00:49:26.309

We would certainly like to see more money, get to these customers and kind of echo what nicor said trying to find a way to do that.

375

00:49:26.309 --> 00:49:35.429

We don't have a we certainly like other utilities wouldn't have a staff to do anything manually for not not at scale.

376

00:49:35.429 --> 00:49:40.409

And our system, the way our system is coded. Yeah.

377

00:49:40.409 --> 00:49:48.210

We will see that matches and conforms with the rules that are both laid out by the regarding disconnections.

378

00:49:48.210 --> 00:49:55.739

Dpas and in 2 forms with rules, so.

379

00:49:55.739 --> 00:50:03.389

We're be concerned about making a system change that might violate those roles. So we'd like to have a bigger conversation.

380

00:50:03.389 --> 00:50:08.909

Yeah, so a couple of things.

381

00:50:08.909 --> 00:50:21.840

1st Jason suggested possibly a breakout meeting, uh, to talk about this and I, I don't know, Leslie and what you think, but what I'm hearing and I don't understand I'm.

382

00:50:21.840 --> 00:50:29.760

They upfront that I don't understand this issue as well as my people, my life tip managers, but.

383

00:50:29.760 --> 00:50:33.599

It seems to me, if Ameren has figured out a way that.

384

00:50:33.599 --> 00:50:41.550

That I assume meets those requirements that you just said, Eric, that there must be some way.

385

00:50:41.550 --> 00:50:45.690

To do it, so perhaps a, a meeting.

386

00:50:45.690 --> 00:50:49.889

With utilities specifically on this to try to figure out.

387

00:50:49.889 --> 00:50:53.280

Uh, the best way to do, it makes sense.

388

00:50:53.280 --> 00:50:53.820

Um,

389

00:50:53.905 --> 00:50:55.614

we haven't talked about this internally,

390

00:50:55.614 --> 00:51:01.914

so I don't I'm asking Leslie and now on the fly what you think about that and then also,

391

00:51:02.514 --> 00:51:02.934

Leslie,

392

00:51:02.934 --> 00:51:09.144

and there's a question from Amy in the chat about the calculation.

393

00:51:09.480 --> 00:51:12.690

And, uh, tied to shut off. So, um.

394

00:51:12.690 --> 00:51:16.559

We said we were going to move on, but can you comment on those things?

395

00:51:16.559 --> 00:51:26.400

Well, being the slow reader that I am, I have not read those yet. So, let me read those and.

396

00:51:26.400 --> 00:51:39.329

And then while Maria does the tip part, I can read those and prepare my response. And then also, yes, we would definitely care to host a meeting with the utilities to work this out.

397

00:51:39.329 --> 00:51:44.309

Okay, um, so I think that, uh.

398

00:51:44.309 --> 00:51:48.630

It makes a lot of sense to see if you can.

399

00:51:48.630 --> 00:52:02.514

I'm doing this with the agencies trying to figure out best management practices that we can apply a, you know, more widely across the state. If we find someone that's doing something. So, I, I think that's a good idea. And we should move forward that.

400

00:52:02.514 --> 00:52:05.934

So, we'll be in touch with the utilities on that.

401

00:52:06.269 --> 00:52:15.000

So, we will give back to your question, Amy, but let's jump and have that.

402

00:52:15.000 --> 00:52:20.070

Maria go over and then we'll jump back on the right calculation.

403

00:52:21.355 --> 00:52:35.364

Thank you, David. Good afternoon. Everyone I will be covering the people report. We had up the steering committee meeting 2 weeks ago. Those that were on that meeting.

404

00:52:35.635 --> 00:52:49.105

Probably, the spark will be a little redundant, but for the pack members and other guests that did not participate in that meeting, that will be an update. So I total of 134447416.

405

00:52:49.105 --> 00:52:54.744

it's currently obligated annually on behalf of 20246 customers that are currently enrolled in.

406

00:52:54.744 --> 00:52:55.074

Pe,

407

00:52:55.074 --> 00:52:59.844

so we're looking at a state wide,

408

00:52:59.844 --> 00:53:03.175

average benefit of a 1000 with 7 dollars,

409

00:53:03.175 --> 00:53:12.684

you can see the break down by local agency on our program status report next to the data.

410

00:53:12.684 --> 00:53:24.175

So, the average benefit that we were looking statewide looked at last year, during these point of time was 969.

411

00:53:24.175 --> 00:53:33.355

so we're roughly a little bit higher than last year in terms of the average benefit.

412

00:53:47.065 --> 00:54:01.945

We have discussed previously for this you ask the local agencies to accept new customers beginning on July 27th when he was being open,

413

00:54:01.945 --> 00:54:04.855

or at any time between July 2008th,

414

00:54:04.855 --> 00:54:05.425

and September 1st,

415

00:54:05.425 --> 00:54:19.945

refunding availability by utility and by Allegheny county in the case of syda the agency started accepting new people customers on January 4th so they

416

00:54:19.945 --> 00:54:24.445

have been now enrolling big customers for a couple weeks,

417

00:54:24.925 --> 00:54:33.324

and they are going to continue taking those applications based on their location for utility logging.

418

00:54:33.324 --> 00:54:47.664

In that case. I've seen those new applicants can contact any of the seat us partnering tech side for the application and new people enrollment applications.

419

00:54:47.695 --> 00:55:02.215

These time has been extended to the end of the new enrollments have been extended to March 31st instead of December 31st with the goal of helping those agencies that

420

00:55:03.864 --> 00:55:15.804

we're leaving a little funding on their budget to continue enrolling new cost new customers and hopefully obligate those budgets Elliot is,

421

00:55:15.804 --> 00:55:24.835
we'll have time to process these new applications in the stars database
after the March 31st deadline,

422
00:55:24.835 --> 00:55:27.385
then after April 1st,

423
00:55:27.414 --> 00:55:36.894
or after the alligator runs out of funding applicants will be offered the
traditional at that time.

424
00:55:43.914 --> 00:55:52.375
At this time, some agencies have stopped taking new publications due to
funding availability in their budgets.

425
00:55:53.094 --> 00:55:58.255
Those are in Marion County CFS,

426
00:55:59.005 --> 00:56:08.034
Illinois family handbook Randy in can vote county only and Western in old
counties,

427
00:56:08.065 --> 00:56:09.894
except county.

428
00:56:12.925 --> 00:56:24.264
In addition to the peak report, we'll we'd like to also share with the
group that our furnace assistance component of the program.

429
00:56:24.775 --> 00:56:33.804
It's currently still available to qualifying homeowners who have I'd
approve likey benefit for the premier or that.

430
00:56:33.804 --> 00:56:48.114
They have been a inactive P customer within the last 12 months, and the
program will continue taking applications until April. 1st, April 30th of
2021.

431
00:56:49.440 --> 00:57:00.389
So, with that that's for today, in terms of a deep reporting at this
time, are there any questions or comments.

432
00:57:05.489 --> 00:57:16.679

Okay, so I'm not seeing any, uh, anything in the chat on Pip or, uh, anyone chiming in. So, um, I think we can.

433

00:57:16.679 --> 00:57:21.869

Go back to the previous conversation and I see. Uh.

434

00:57:21.869 --> 00:57:34.559

Kim, from Ameren, I think is saying that she can talk about the process they have in place. So Kim, can you.

435

00:57:51.059 --> 00:57:55.349

Kim, are you there, Maria, can you unmute Jim and see if.

436

00:57:56.909 --> 00:58:00.090

Yeah, I'm trying.

437

00:58:01.710 --> 00:58:06.269

Yeah, I'm trying I think you should be okay to me.

438

00:58:12.599 --> 00:58:17.429

She just wrote in the chat that she can't. Unmute. Okay, I see that.

439

00:58:17.429 --> 00:58:27.809

So, maybe we can continue to see if we can solve that problem. Leslie and you have any, uh, thing that you can.

440

00:58:29.034 --> 00:58:41.815

Respond to Amy I'll read amy's. Is there a way to formulate the calculation and like dot net? So it's no longer tied to shut off notice, but rather to total balance. For example, if the balance is greater than 120% of the.

441

00:58:44.670 --> 00:58:48.510

Our funds will be released to cover the remainder up to the cap.

442

00:58:48.510 --> 00:58:51.929

So, anything on that.

443

00:58:58.650 --> 00:59:05.849

Leslie, and can well, I can I add something. So this.

444

00:59:05.849 --> 00:59:10.710

Now, I'm sorry. Okay. Go ahead.

445

00:59:11.940 --> 00:59:15.329

With that.

446

00:59:15.329 --> 00:59:26.099

I accidentally needed myself so what I was saying was the policy and calculations, it's had our discretion. It's about our, a money.

447

00:59:26.394 --> 00:59:33.295

It's a part of our federal crisis assistance program. So it's something that we define ever here in our state plan.

448

00:59:33.744 --> 00:59:45.085

So any changes that we would make always, they need to be reflected in our state plan but we have to be very careful to avoid negative consequences.

449

00:59:45.085 --> 00:59:48.744

And perverse incentives, so we need to.

450

00:59:49.500 --> 00:59:52.585

Get really careful consideration to what we're going to do.

451

00:59:52.914 --> 01:00:06.565

1 idea that I had was possibly paying on the higher, the reconnect amount, or the outstanding balance up to the cap, which would be similar to what your Amy is suggesting, or proposing.

452

01:00:07.585 --> 01:00:16.074

And but we also have to understand the financial impact of a whole program here, because at least cover the funds.

453

01:00:16.105 --> 01:00:26.034

We are statutorily required to have the crisis assistance funds available through March 15th of every year. Now, this year doesn't.

454

01:00:26.639 --> 01:00:34.320

No, look like that's going to be a problem, but for our policy for next year, we need to be very careful with what we.

455

01:00:34.320 --> 01:00:37.500

What we put into effect.

456

01:00:40.500 --> 01:00:45.210

Thank Thank you for that for that input, Leslie and that was very informative.

457

01:00:45.210 --> 01:00:53.730

This is Mindy. Can I say something real quick about that? Sure. Okay.

458

01:00:53.730 --> 01:00:58.260

Um, what Leslie and just talked about about the higher of the 2.

459

01:00:58.260 --> 01:01:03.389

That works great for Ameren and your communicating vendors.

460

01:01:03.389 --> 01:01:07.139

But that just panics me because.

461

01:01:07.139 --> 01:01:10.199

In order to be fair, we would have to call.

462

01:01:10.199 --> 01:01:16.139

Every 1 of our non communicating vendors for every application that comes in this store.

463

01:01:18.239 --> 01:01:32.880

Can you elaborate on what you mean, Wendy? I'm not calling you. Sure sure. We have a customer come in and they're just kind of.

464

01:01:32.880 --> 01:01:38.010

But we're supposed to see what that outstanding balance really is.

465

01:01:38.010 --> 01:01:41.369

We would have to call those vendors. We only have.

466

01:01:41.369 --> 01:01:52.019

A hand well, in our in our territory, we only have Ameren that communicates with why he thought net whenever we do our raise, we have to call.

467

01:01:52.019 --> 01:02:00.389

Every vendor and get the amounts that that person really knows what their outstanding balances what their amount to reconnect is.

468

01:02:00.389 --> 01:02:07.829

We have to do that, and if if we are going to be fair to our customers that are not communicating.

469

01:02:07.829 --> 01:02:11.610

We would have to do that on every application we took.

470

01:02:12.690 --> 01:02:26.664

Does that make sense? And I'd like to Cathy from CFF and I'd like to add that isn't just 1 call, because we're talking split vendors.

471

01:02:26.664 --> 01:02:36.445

So you're talking a propane company possibly and a roll electric. You know so those are 2 phone calls on every application.

472

01:02:36.775 --> 01:02:46.405

They're not just municipal, it's gas and electric that we would have to find out what that the larger was the outstanding balance or.

473

01:02:46.710 --> 01:03:01.014

For Cathy and Mindy would that be how does that process work now under the existing system if they're non communicating vendors like the propane and the CO Ops and stuff, how are you getting? That are a amount forgiving?

474

01:03:02.275 --> 01:03:16.614

We call we call to get them. We do have 1, like, it is a regulated utility, it's liberty, and we do email them. So we don't call them.

475

01:03:16.614 --> 01:03:24.744

We have an email process set up where they give us that information and some, some other utilities that like to be emailed.

476

01:03:25.079 --> 01:03:31.889

And they send it back, but you have to contact them all, but we're only doing that on our applications.

477

01:03:32.244 --> 01:03:47.125

Correct and like, we've got maybe 20% on a regular 20% of our applications are our age, the rest of them. We do their dbts, and we go on about our business and we have got in my agency.

478

01:03:47.125 --> 01:04:01.914

We've got 2 people that make those phone calls to those vendors, because we don't want to bombard the vendors with all 9 of our counties are 22 staff calling them all the time, which is another thing you're going to get, and you're gonna get pushed back.

479

01:04:01.914 --> 01:04:06.505

I know from people like North electric, if we call on every single application, we do.

480

01:04:08.130 --> 01:04:16.824

I just that just it scares me. I'm sorry Thank you. That's very enlightening. I'm just I'm for the benefit of us.

481

01:04:16.855 --> 01:04:27.744

Um, Northerners who aren't familiar with that are you saying that if we went to the other process, you would be making, like, twice as many phone calls basically, or under the comments.

482

01:04:27.989 --> 01:04:42.054

So, under the under the current process, how do you know, if it's going to be an application or not before you call they call us and tell us that they are either getting disconnected because they have a disconnect notice or that they have been disconnected.

483

01:04:42.114 --> 01:04:43.824

That's why we call.

484

01:04:44.130 --> 01:04:48.690

I see same here.

485

01:04:48.690 --> 01:04:53.639

Let me add something so this, this goes back, maybe 25 or 30 years.

486

01:04:53.639 --> 01:04:56.909

It's the difficulty to process.

487

01:04:56.909 --> 01:05:04.050

Emergency assistants led to the creation of what was called an amount to restore form.

488

01:05:04.050 --> 01:05:09.329

And a customer and back, then it was also only customers actually.

489

01:05:09.329 --> 01:05:14.550

Without service, they were required to go into the utility.

490

01:05:14.550 --> 01:05:19.500

And get an amount to restore form, which would show what they needed to pay.

491

01:05:19.500 --> 01:05:26.760

Or what PC or what? A combination of the, the person in needed to pay to get back.

492

01:05:26.760 --> 01:05:33.960

And I know in this, in the computer system, there still is a remnant of that amount to restore form.

493

01:05:33.960 --> 01:05:41.039

That the utilities enter into their system and then can retrieve it.

494

01:05:41.039 --> 01:05:44.219

So, to an extent, this is automated and.

495

01:05:44.219 --> 01:05:50.639

You know, with what Kathy and Mindy says, I'm sure cedar would say the same thing.

496

01:05:50.639 --> 01:05:54.989

We are reliant on this sort of technology.

497

01:05:54.989 --> 01:05:58.380

To make reconnection assistance work.

498

01:05:58.380 --> 01:06:03.719

And I think it can be done.

499

01:06:03.985 --> 01:06:05.605

Reconnection assistance,

500

01:06:05.605 --> 01:06:08.815

we don't we don't have any difficulty with and it,

501

01:06:08.844 --> 01:06:09.565

like I said,

502

01:06:09.594 --> 01:06:22.045

it is based on when there is a disconnect notice or a customer is off and that we make those communications to the utility companies.

503

01:06:22.315 --> 01:06:23.394

The, the.

504

01:06:23.699 --> 01:06:30.239

Non communicating ones, just like clockwork and it's no problem. Um, it's it's.

505

01:06:30.684 --> 01:06:41.335

If everybody was coming in, and we were trying to determine what outstanding balances were and stuff, that's where the problem would come in that.

506

01:06:41.514 --> 01:06:56.155

There's no way we could contact all of those utility companies, but the customers don't have to actually go and get a form filled out. We call them we get the amount needed to restore, you know, used to we got the 90 day payments.

507

01:06:56.155 --> 01:07:04.465

Now, we don't even need those so that we have no trouble doing and keeping up with. It's just if we had to do it on everybody.

508

01:07:14.130 --> 01:07:21.420

Okay, thanks everybody Kim bond were you able to.

509

01:07:21.420 --> 01:07:25.260

On mute yourself? I think so. Can you hear me.

510

01:07:25.260 --> 01:07:28.650

Yes. Okay. Good. Good. Good.

511

01:07:28.650 --> 01:07:32.039

All right, so I think the question I was supposed to amor was how we.

512

01:07:32.039 --> 01:07:35.789

We're able to communicate through rely he done that.

513

01:07:35.789 --> 01:07:40.739

Our customers who still were in imminent danger.

514

01:07:40.739 --> 01:07:55.074

But we weren't sending a disconnection. No, there's 2. and so what we, I can't speak to the details of the coding because that was in our, it department. But basically, what they did was when our customers started entering the collection timeline.

515

01:07:55.224 --> 01:07:58.014

So our timeline would tell us our collection time. I would tell us.

516

01:07:58.289 --> 01:08:11.280

The customers who have the potential of receiving a disconnection notice, and when they were at that status of receiving a note, then those customers are pulled out that timeline. So that notice would not be sent.

517

01:08:11.280 --> 01:08:24.659

But I T, department kept that set of customers about identified that set of customers and continue to communicate through lie. He dot net as if they were in imminent danger.

518

01:08:24.659 --> 01:08:27.689

So, they had to that's the way they.

519

01:08:27.689 --> 01:08:36.869

Identified who to continue the communication to I, he died not to say we're going to be disconnected, although they didn't get the disconnection notice.

520

01:08:36.869 --> 01:08:45.539

Is that if that makes sense so they created a code and I can't speak to the code or how it was created, but that's how they identify those customers.

521

01:08:50.454 --> 01:08:51.805

That's really helpful.

522

01:08:51.805 --> 01:08:52.164

Kim,

523

01:08:52.194 --> 01:08:54.475

and the other utilities,

524

01:08:54.475 --> 01:08:54.744

I mean,

525

01:08:54.744 --> 01:08:56.274

maybe you are aware of that,

526

01:08:56.274 --> 01:08:56.515

that,

527

01:08:56.545 --> 01:08:58.225

that that's how it works,

528

01:08:58.255 --> 01:09:01.135

but doing that,

529

01:09:01.164 --> 01:09:01.554

which,

530

01:09:01.793 --> 01:09:02.154

you know,

531

01:09:02.154 --> 01:09:03.085

from what Kim said,

532

01:09:03.085 --> 01:09:03.444

it's,

533

01:09:03.895 --> 01:09:04.255

it's,

534

01:09:04.284 --> 01:09:10.314

it's communicating to the agencies that the customer is in a minute disconnection status and yet.

535

01:09:10.619 --> 01:09:14.789

Um, the customer, um, is, is.

536

01:09:14.789 --> 01:09:25.710

Sent a notice kind of sounds ideal. It removes the stress from the customer's. Like, they get the larger Grant and.

537

01:09:25.710 --> 01:09:35.609

Everyone wins, the utility gets gets more money and the funds get used it. Is that something that sounds.

538

01:09:35.609 --> 01:09:43.319

Impossible to the other 3 utilities to to make work without significant. It changes.

539

01:09:44.970 --> 01:09:52.409

This is Ellen rentals from nicor gas sent a question through.

540

01:09:52.409 --> 01:10:00.119

Were you own customers that were are currently flagged low income.

541

01:10:00.119 --> 01:10:05.460

Because we are able to segregate those customers, but I.

542

01:10:05.460 --> 01:10:10.229

And I can't speak for the programming. I know nothing seems to be easy.

543

01:10:10.229 --> 01:10:16.979

But I knew a customer who's going in to an agency for the 1st time.

544

01:10:16.979 --> 01:10:26.699

And hadn't been certified before I don't see how we could distinguish them from any other customer. But I, I think we have an opportunity to, at least.

545

01:10:27.175 --> 01:10:40.404

Identify the current people, current customers that are flagged as low income. So to answer your question, Alan, we did not just isolate the low income customers.

546

01:10:40.675 --> 01:10:44.904

It was any customer who would have been receiving a disconnection notice because.

547

01:10:45.180 --> 01:10:56.395

You know, it could have been a customer who had never went to, like, heat before and was going to get some help to be certified as low income. So we didn't want to segregate that.

548

01:10:57.024 --> 01:11:01.704

So, anyone that was going to receive a note is what we.

549

01:11:02.130 --> 01:11:12.899

Continued the coding to communicate the lie he done or excuse me imminent danger. Now I do want to also mention just for transparency that that.

550

01:11:13.284 --> 01:11:19.375

Work around that, I just mentioned did not work for any customers who were on it, a payment agreement.

551

01:11:19.704 --> 01:11:30.145

So we will still have to think about how to make that work for customers who did set up a payment agreement prior to them possibly receiving a disconnection notice.

552

01:11:35.100 --> 01:11:39.090

And did you also only do this during the moritorium?

553

01:11:39.090 --> 01:11:44.670

I mean, at some point, you must be letting disconnect notices go out.

554

01:11:45.960 --> 01:11:49.074

Or are we doing 2 things separately?

555

01:11:49.104 --> 01:12:01.404

You're always putting people in an eminence that you're evaluating them or an eminent disconnect status and then it's totally separate from truly issuing disconnect notices.

556

01:12:02.425 --> 01:12:07.404

Right. And we only did this during the time that we were in moratorium.

557

01:12:08.034 --> 01:12:18.055

So, prior to us sending disconnections in November, I believe there was is when we did it now, we're not communicating that information at this point.

558

01:12:18.630 --> 01:12:22.079

All right Thank you.

559

01:12:28.260 --> 01:12:36.210

Okay, do we have any more conversation on.

560

01:12:36.210 --> 01:12:50.850

That topic well, it's based on what Kim described and windy and and some of the other speakers.

561

01:12:50.850 --> 01:12:56.039

This sounds like something that is really worthy of.

562

01:12:56.039 --> 01:12:59.100

You know, further discussion.

563

01:12:59.100 --> 01:13:13.829

And kind of quickly, because, you know, the dams about to break on April 1st, we know ridges are are going to be significant because of coven and the economic.

564

01:13:13.829 --> 01:13:18.630

You know, I, I, I just.

565

01:13:18.630 --> 01:13:27.869

And maybe that's something that Alan Amy, and I can follow up with the utilities on, but I hope like we could get and.

566

01:13:27.869 --> 01:13:31.170

Agency representatives.

567

01:13:31.170 --> 01:13:36.149

To to engage on that call, because it sounds like that this can be solved.

568

01:13:36.149 --> 01:13:39.840

It just, it, it just requires some.

569

01:13:39.840 --> 01:13:46.619

So careful thinking so that there aren't as, as you said, David, unintended consequences, but.

570

01:13:46.619 --> 01:13:53.279

Boy, I think everyone benefits if we can figure this out to get people the largest grant possible.

571

01:13:53.279 --> 01:13:59.100

Doesn't have to return funds to the federal government and the utilities get.

572

01:13:59.100 --> 01:14:06.329

More of their marriages collected, so it seems like a win win win.

573

01:14:06.329 --> 01:14:14.310

Yeah, and that's, uh, I I've got here is a note to set up a meeting with the utility. So I, I think we'll be a.

574

01:14:14.310 --> 01:14:20.039

Reaching out and making sure that the utilities, uh, we'll, we'll talk and kind of.

575

01:14:20.039 --> 01:14:27.569

Decide what the agenda is going to be, but make sure the right people from the utilities are on so that we can figure this out.

576

01:14:27.569 --> 01:14:30.600

Hey.

577

01:14:30.600 --> 01:14:34.739

All right, so.

578

01:14:34.739 --> 01:14:48.840

We're through the discussion items before we move into other business, I'm just going to do 1 last call. Is there anything else on the discussion items before we move to the 2 other business items?

579

01:14:52.920 --> 01:14:57.960

Okay, I'm not seeing anyone chime in. So, um.

580

01:14:58.645 --> 01:15:13.284

I don't know, I, I see the names on here and, uh, um, this group and a lot of them look familiar because we've been meeting for the last. Uh, I don't know how many months how many months has it been 6 months on the energy affordability discussion?

581

01:15:13.979 --> 01:15:21.180

A group, so, um, I'll start the update, but ask, uh, anyone else, uh, who's been.

582

01:15:21.180 --> 01:15:24.779
Greatly involved Karen Allen.

583
01:15:24.779 --> 01:15:28.859
I don't think John is on, but, uh, Jason.

584
01:15:28.859 --> 01:15:33.210
And anyone else that wants to chime in as well, but.

585
01:15:33.210 --> 01:15:42.600
We have been meeting for several months, talking data and more recently, hammering out language.

586
01:15:42.600 --> 01:15:49.859
Uh, for a revisions to the energy assistance act, uh, those revisions.

587
01:15:49.859 --> 01:15:55.439
Um, are due to the legislative review board? I'm saying that, right?

588
01:15:55.439 --> 01:16:00.810
Uh, tomorrow, um, so, Karen, you've recently, uh.

589
01:16:00.810 --> 01:16:10.979
Been working on the final draft of that. So, would you want to come off mute and just I don't know that we need to go line for line, but just talk about.

590
01:16:10.979 --> 01:16:25.560
Uh, the status of that sure David. Yeah so the utilities and and other advocates have been meeting and also agency representatives.

591
01:16:25.560 --> 01:16:32.430
To try and figure out what the, what statutory changes are needed to really.

592
01:16:32.430 --> 01:16:39.420
Increase participation in Pip and solve some of the issues that the agencies have had in terms of.

593
01:16:40.345 --> 01:16:42.265
The covering the administrative,

594

01:16:42.265 --> 01:16:56.935

additional administrative costs and processing tip applications and and solving other problems as well such as ensuring that undocumented persons can can participate

595

01:16:56.965 --> 01:16:57.954

going forward.

596

01:16:59.034 --> 01:17:01.375

And so we've got language,

597

01:17:01.375 --> 01:17:06.085

not all of it has been agreed to buy the utilities but,

598

01:17:06.175 --> 01:17:06.534

you know,

599

01:17:06.534 --> 01:17:14.095

we have a sort of a package of changes written into the energy assistance act.

600

01:17:14.369 --> 01:17:20.819

And we're in the process of identifying a sponsor.

601

01:17:20.819 --> 01:17:29.039

So that the bill can be brought to the legislative reference bureau for formal drafting.

602

01:17:33.475 --> 01:17:48.293

Hey, Karen reference. Yeah, it's going to go ahead, David. No, I just, I knew, I didn't know what stood for Karen and maybe David, you know, this, as well, in terms of the timing of the report.

603

01:17:48.324 --> 01:17:52.704

Do you know, when that report will come out and impact numbers will get an opportunity to review it?

604

01:17:53.039 --> 01:17:56.039

As well, as the proposed language changes.

605

01:18:00.300 --> 01:18:11.069

So, down cold in the who's been the facilitator of those meetings, we'll be drafting report. I don't know when he's planning on on completing that, um.

606

01:18:11.069 --> 01:18:18.840

Presumably you will, I'll get a chance to review the draft and sort of acknowledge that.

607

01:18:18.840 --> 01:18:24.420

What what's in? The report is is consistent with what everyone's experience.

608

01:18:24.420 --> 01:18:36.210

And the latest draft is essentially the draft that John colden shared with.

609

01:18:36.210 --> 01:18:42.060

Persons the other day. Okay. Thanks, Karen.

610

01:18:44.220 --> 01:18:51.420

All right anyone else have anything on that on anything brief.

611

01:18:51.420 --> 01:18:54.479

Um, I take it comment will be.

612

01:18:54.479 --> 01:18:58.590

You know, doing something similar with the legislative.

613

01:18:58.590 --> 01:19:12.569

The, and as David said, it's legislative reference bureau and there to assist people to make sure anything that gets introduced as a bill.

614

01:19:12.569 --> 01:19:18.659

Uh, uses the right language and the right system of referencing other legislation.

615

01:19:18.659 --> 01:19:23.970

So, as Karen said, the low income advocates have.

616

01:19:23.970 --> 01:19:31.289

We'll be putting through a legislator something to we don't have a sponsor. We haven't introduced.

617

01:19:31.289 --> 01:19:34.739

This is definitely an early stage in the process.

618

01:19:34.739 --> 01:19:38.460

And I think the intent of what Karen put together.

619

01:19:38.460 --> 01:19:44.369

Definitely relied on suggestions made by.

620

01:19:44.369 --> 01:19:48.479

By D. C. Oh. And by the utilities and by.

621

01:19:48.479 --> 01:19:52.409

Compromises we made of course, this is not.

622

01:19:52.409 --> 01:19:56.909

Some areas there weren't compromises, so this will be our language.

623

01:19:56.909 --> 01:20:02.340

And you've seen pretty much what it is, and at some point.

624

01:20:02.340 --> 01:20:08.039

It's going to be come a bill and it's going to be an early stage of the process.

625

01:20:08.039 --> 01:20:14.640

I would take it that our sponsors and if comment introduces something through a.

626

01:20:14.640 --> 01:20:21.300

A legislator, or the other utilities, uh, there'll be sponsors and the sponsors will say to people.

627

01:20:21.300 --> 01:20:26.159

Get together and talk about it so, although John has done his work.

628

01:20:26.159 --> 01:20:32.279

This is still the process that a lot. There's a lot of process ahead.

629

01:20:32.279 --> 01:20:40.920

And I'm just counting on the, the goodwill and and efforts to understand each other's positions that was displayed.

630

01:20:40.920 --> 01:20:44.699

In our our formal process convene.

631

01:20:44.699 --> 01:20:59.664

Through the stipulation of the yeah, and I, I do that this wasn't a, to this group wasn't exactly where I thought I'd relay this information, but I think I'm gonna do it now, because I've got meetings for the rest of the day.

632

01:21:00.864 --> 01:21:15.324

I've talked to our legislative liaison on how our process works and the language that I brought that brought a Trina back, then several months ago, had 6 items that.

633

01:21:17.699 --> 01:21:28.170

Wanted changed or changes that we desired and I found out yesterday that I had already run those up the flagpole. So those are going to be.

634

01:21:28.170 --> 01:21:31.255

And a proposal, that's a proposal.

635

01:21:31.524 --> 01:21:45.354

Uh, so the, there are Bill will be out there as well, but so the, the other items that aren't part of those 6 right now, of course, the governor's office has not signed off on those.

636

01:21:45.595 --> 01:21:59.215

But those are ones that, as that process goes forward, Ellen, and the rest of the group will be, we were involved in those discussions. So we'll be talking to my directors office in the governor's office about those as well.

637

01:22:03.420 --> 01:22:17.784

So, I think that's everything on energy, affordability, the discussion group. I think that a lot of good came out of that group. I think that some legislation is going to end up, coming out of the, that process.

638

01:22:17.784 --> 01:22:30.475

But I think the, uh, just the conversations and some of the data analysis data sharing that agencies are that we did, and that some of the utilities did has been a fruitful.

639

01:22:30.475 --> 01:22:45.444

And I think that it's going to help conversations here at the pack going forward as well. So, I, I do think it was a good process. Karen, you reached out to me, seems like a long time ago now, but I'm glad that we worked on this together.

640

01:22:45.444 --> 01:22:48.324

I think it was a fruitful process to build through.

641

01:22:48.659 --> 01:22:55.050

So, that's that the last item that I have is a, a.

642

01:22:55.050 --> 01:22:59.069

Comment start update and I think.

643

01:22:59.069 --> 01:23:09.119

Area are you doing that? And if oh, uh, would you like me to share the screen? Hey, Karen you're still on, can you? Yeah Thank you.

644

01:23:11.159 --> 01:23:16.890

Hi, David yes if you want to share your screen, I can walk through it with you. Oh, okay.

645

01:23:16.890 --> 01:23:20.609

Let me.

646

01:23:21.930 --> 01:23:31.135

I've got too many windows open. Okay. There we go. All right perfect. So good afternoon.

647

01:23:31.164 --> 01:23:39.444

Everyone I will be going over the comments overview, which of course, stands for the supplemental ridge reduction program.

648

01:23:40.345 --> 01:23:52.015

So going to the next slide, we can jump right into the details that we all know that part of the energy assistance act. Utilities have now been able to utilize.

649

01:23:54.810 --> 01:23:59.130

Okay.

650

01:23:59.130 --> 01:24:02.220
Okay.

651
01:24:06.930 --> 01:24:10.020
Okay.

652
01:24:14.670 --> 01:24:18.479
Yeah, as Erin.

653
01:24:20.399 --> 01:24:25.560
Yeah, we can maybe Erin can you get us from your video? Maybe.

654
01:24:25.560 --> 01:24:30.210
Guess what we're getting feedback you're breaking up.

655
01:24:33.270 --> 01:24:37.229
Can you still hear me.

656
01:24:37.229 --> 01:24:46.560
Can you still yeah, that's much better and really it started breaking up immediately. So I think, uh, from this slide, you probably need to start to start.

657
01:24:48.869 --> 01:24:52.164
Okay, no problem. Sorry about that. Everyone.

658
01:24:52.765 --> 01:24:53.784
So as mentioned,

659
01:24:53.784 --> 01:24:56.395
we know that the Illinois energy assistance act now,

660
01:24:56.395 --> 01:24:57.475
awards utilities,

661
01:24:57.475 --> 01:25:00.564
the opportunity to leverage the excess 8 cents,

662
01:25:00.564 --> 01:25:02.305
which is collected from the supplemental,

663

01:25:02.305 --> 01:25:04.465
low income energy assistance tax,

664
01:25:04.734 --> 01:25:08.875
in order to support an additional energy assistance offering that we're calling.

665
01:25:08.875 --> 01:25:23.064
Sorry? So, that start program is something that com, Ed is utilizing to serve additional limited income customers with a monthly ridge credit, which is up to that 8333 Max, similar to PIP. If they paid on time and in full.

666
01:25:23.064 --> 01:25:27.715
So we wanted to utilize some practices, best practices from the program.

667
01:25:27.715 --> 01:25:27.954
So,

668
01:25:27.954 --> 01:25:30.835
comic did structure our program very similar,

669
01:25:30.835 --> 01:25:42.805
requiring our participants to actually enroll in budget billing to provide that stabilize budget billing amount along with again that incentivized and behavior with those monthly rearrange credits.

670
01:25:42.805 --> 01:25:51.414
We did launch into manual capacity November 1st, 2019, and we targeted recipients in order to meet the income requirements.

671
01:25:51.414 --> 01:26:02.725
And we wanted to do that to offer an additional longterm energy assistance option to those lie heap recipients who may have been experiencing hardship throughout the program year.

672
01:26:02.725 --> 01:26:16.135
So our launch was a 2 phase program launch again originally very manual, and it was managed by the care team to complement a suite of available care options. And then we did some internal I. T.

673
01:26:16.135 --> 01:26:24.505

enhancements and we had a project that completed October of 2020. so would allow our a comment, a customer service representatives to assist with enrollments.

674

01:26:24.534 --> 01:26:38.305

We also did some automations to expand customer access, utilizing case management and automated customer correspondence via letters and emails to support their long term success within the program.

675

01:26:38.305 --> 01:26:45.625

So, we want to make sure the customers have access and awareness to the program. So we decided to do start solicitation.

676

01:26:49.284 --> 01:27:04.164

Which understood monthly to proactively engage eligible customers and offer long term financial assistance. We've gotten great feedback from customers, stating that they're helpful or appreciative of the help that's offered to them without them having to proactively seek that assistance.

677

01:27:04.884 --> 01:27:17.515

The 2nd component is those eligible customers. They may enroll by again contacting the call center or emailing our mailbox to provide ease of access those information or that information I'm sorry.

678

01:27:17.545 --> 01:27:28.645

Is provided in the solicitation letter in detail. Um, and then, of course, they have options to leverage various channels of outreach that we utilize to educate customers and build awareness.

679

01:27:29.064 --> 01:27:39.595

We do things such as emails, letters over the phone conversations, which we know are very valuable with these type of programs, making sure that customers are privy and understanding the parameters of the program.

680

01:27:39.895 --> 01:27:44.064

And then, of course, utilizing our call center for assistance as well.

681

01:27:44.904 --> 01:27:59.515

And then we know that the available additional dollars help us to support our customers with their evolving needs, especially during this time of cobit hardship, and making sure that they get that financial assistance and we can expand the available options for them.

682

01:28:00.145 --> 01:28:06.925

Next slide. Please. All right so, what I wanted to do here is just to give you a side by side comparison.

683

01:28:06.925 --> 01:28:15.175

A lot of people are well versed in the programs of fit, but wanted to line up just to see where the nuances do kind of coincide and or differ.

684

01:28:15.534 --> 01:28:28.375

So, for the supplemental ridge reduction program, if we talk about eligibility, we do a private legislation line up with the recipient being the 200%, federal poverty level for supplemental ridge reduction program.

685

01:28:28.375 --> 01:28:36.685

Those customers are required to have an a reread that way. We can make sure that they are receiving that arrears reduction credit.

686

01:28:38.274 --> 01:28:53.034

And then, in the event they have in harsha, they can in fact, receive assistance as we know of course, is the trigger event for them to be eligible. But they can also receive additional care funding. If applicable in the time that they have a hardship while they're on the program.

687

01:28:53.664 --> 01:29:06.954

So, their program design as mentioned does require for them to set up budget billing. We don't have that monthly state benefit. Of course, but our budget billing does do a 6 month review.

688

01:29:06.984 --> 01:29:19.284

We want to make sure that we're mindful of the customer's usage that if they do have a deferred credit or debit, that is taken into consideration to determine if there's any changes that need to be made throughout the program.

689

01:29:19.524 --> 01:29:33.774

And we do send the customers correspondence in regards to the budget billing review as well, as a bill message on their monthly bill. So, they know in advance when their budget billing review will occur for the monthly grant amounts.

690

01:29:34.045 --> 01:29:46.795

We do as mentioned, have that 8333 Max for the program similar to Pip and then for customers a requirement to be current on the bill the answer is yes, of course, we want to make sure that we're promoting positive payment behavior.

691

01:29:46.795 --> 01:29:59.725

We also know that customers may experience do the time during their time of enrollment. So we did offer for customers to get up to 3 late payments while they're enrolled within the program before they may potentially default.

692

01:30:01.524 --> 01:30:13.194

And as mentioned, again, budget billing is the required component in order for them to remain in the program. And then the length of the program is as long as they have in a refuge, they can remain on the program if they pay on time.

693

01:30:13.194 --> 01:30:27.895

And in full, we'll continue to give them the 8333 mics credit every month until they get down to 0T. That is our ultimate goal that customers do essentially graduate if you will from the program, which would hopefully continue on for a long term payment behavior.

694

01:30:29.845 --> 01:30:44.425

And then the benefits of this program, we are able to do proactive customer outreach to Pre qualified customer. So again, there is a customer satisfaction quantity that they're appreciative of doing that in advance during their time of trying to find assistance.

695

01:30:45.114 --> 01:30:58.435

And then we have that administered program in house with so we can continue to engage our customers and build awareness for not only this program. But also other programs as well. And then utilizing those additional dollars that we have available.

696

01:30:58.435 --> 01:31:04.404

We want to make sure that we're able to assist our customers and as many options as possible.

697

01:31:05.755 --> 01:31:20.095

All right next slide and that's pretty much it that sums up the overview of, uh, in the appendix is just the legislation that speaks to the availability to leverage the dollars. So I will stop there.

698

01:31:20.425 --> 01:31:23.064

And that ends my overview pending any questions.

699

01:31:28.380 --> 01:31:34.470

Uh, I think I have 1, so, is this, um, I guess.

700

01:31:34.470 --> 01:31:44.430

Obviously, not all live heap customers have riches, but is this offered to every 1 of the heap customers within a com a customer.

701

01:31:46.164 --> 01:31:46.555

Um,

702

01:31:46.555 --> 01:31:55.555

so we do send out the full of customers that have a pasty balance,

703

01:31:55.585 --> 01:32:04.404

but we are sending out a 1000 letters them off currently that number will definitely increase as we continue to expand efforts to,

704

01:32:04.404 --> 01:32:04.704

um,

705

01:32:04.704 --> 01:32:06.505

get customers engaged in the program.

706

01:32:07.284 --> 01:32:14.364

But we don't send it to all of the population. We do have to stagger it out just to make sure that customers have time to respond.

707

01:32:26.578 --> 01:32:32.429

I think we're area and I, I think we lost. Yeah. Sorry.

708

01:32:32.429 --> 01:32:46.253

Yeah, David, I think that the question is somewhat yes, right if somebody headline heat and they're not eligible, we try to spread out the enrollments based on calls into the care center.

709

01:32:46.253 --> 01:32:50.094

So we send out we reach out to a 1000 potential customers a month.

710

01:32:50.488 --> 01:32:55.679

Okay.

711

01:32:55.679 --> 01:33:02.819

Here.

712

01:33:07.408 --> 01:33:16.828

Hello.

713

01:33:16.828 --> 01:33:21.179

Technology David, did that help answer the question.

714

01:33:21.179 --> 01:33:27.923

Yeah, and then this is coming out of the 8 cent money as Aaron said.

715

01:33:27.923 --> 01:33:37.793

So historically we had the RP that, uh, that money came out of, like, generally speaking how much.

716

01:33:38.844 --> 01:33:52.913

How much would the are how much of the 8 sent was the R program spending? How much is this are and are you going to run out of 8 cent money? I assume if everyone got on this RP that was eligible, you would run out of 8 cent money.

717

01:33:53.248 --> 01:33:57.748

That's right it comes out of the send a portion of meter charge.

718

01:33:57.748 --> 01:34:11.604

So, we've got to balance that, and it's kind of a balance of how much do you hold back for our payments versus how much do you open up for start? We were doing start very manually when we introduced it about a year ago.

719

01:34:11.993 --> 01:34:20.573

We put in some automation in our customer system to automate the enrollments and the, the grant of those credits on the customer accounts.

720

01:34:20.849 --> 01:34:29.694

So, now we can take a few 1000 or before we were kind of trickling the folks in but yeah, it's a balance between the art and the start.

721

01:34:30.173 --> 01:34:35.993

We're planning on a few 1M in start this year and then seeing, if we can take it even more.

722

01:34:36.298 --> 01:34:41.158

To make sure that we're maximizing the use of that at 8 cent collection for our customers.

723

01:34:41.158 --> 01:34:53.878

Okay, great Thank you. Jason. And any references Maria I do have a follow up question to you guys know how many customers have assistants through the program.

724

01:34:59.279 --> 01:35:05.849

I'll let Barry and take that. 1. can you hear me now?

725

01:35:07.793 --> 01:35:20.814

We can hear you difficulties all around the house and find a signal. Um, so, uh, for the enrollments, we have approximately 1200 active participants at this particular time.

726

01:35:20.814 --> 01:35:25.913

Um, but again, as mentioned, we're looking to, uh, try to get more people involved.

727

01:35:25.913 --> 01:35:36.413

It was our 1st, full year of deployment during a cobit year so we're trying to see the analysis and how we can best, uh, capture more customers, participation and success within the program.

728

01:35:40.798 --> 01:35:48.958

Great this is Ellen was can I ask another question? Sure sure.

729

01:35:48.958 --> 01:35:53.519

If if we were able to.

730

01:35:53.519 --> 01:35:58.498

Sort of provide more emergency services funds.

731

01:35:58.498 --> 01:36:05.399

Would that be beneficial? So not as many people would need to go on a.

732

01:36:05.399 --> 01:36:12.929

Because I'm thinking you're going to run out of money in the 8 cents, and it's also taking away from the state.

733

01:36:12.929 --> 01:36:18.298

State funds where it seems like right now we have more federal funds.

734

01:36:18.298 --> 01:36:33.059

So, is there a balance between someone who, you know, I see you're comparing this to Pip maybe someone who has a multi year arrears reduction plan, as opposed to someone who might be able to just.

735

01:36:33.059 --> 01:36:39.868

You know, take the 1 time emergency assistants and get themselves out of debt.

736

01:36:39.868 --> 01:36:43.139

Am I thinking that correctly?

737

01:36:43.139 --> 01:36:52.048

Want to piggyback on ellen's question as well because I'm wondering in general how this relates to the, to the.

738

01:36:52.048 --> 01:36:55.439

To the R, a funding situation.

739

01:36:55.439 --> 01:37:03.779

Are these clients that are enrolled in the clients who could have been funded through our a, had they not been enrolled in the.

740

01:37:03.779 --> 01:37:06.988

Are we is this program competing with.

741

01:37:06.988 --> 01:37:10.259

The federal funds that we need to spend.

742

01:37:12.713 --> 01:37:27.684

This is arienne. Those are great questions. I know for the customers that are currently enrolled. They have a very, very amount. They're Pre program. Abridge does very. And I just want to make sure I'm tracking what you are.

743

01:37:27.684 --> 01:37:34.583

You stating you're wanting to ensure those gold and the, that have.

744

01:37:36.418 --> 01:37:42.029

The benefit that what you're asking.

745

01:37:42.029 --> 01:37:47.458

For me at cub or for.

746

01:37:47.458 --> 01:37:54.958

For either I'm sorry I want to make sure I'll check with you. Both. You were kind of breaking I'm thinking that.

747

01:37:54.958 --> 01:38:04.469

If there's a customer in the spring that is going to get a disconnect notice if an R. A.

748

01:38:04.469 --> 01:38:12.328

Fund 400 dollars would get them out of debt. Is that preferable to put them on a.

749

01:38:15.024 --> 01:38:16.194

Again, that's a good question.

750

01:38:16.194 --> 01:38:18.323

I know for our enrollment counts,

751

01:38:18.323 --> 01:38:26.543

we do have the customers as mentioned with the various amounts for us to know how much there are a,

752

01:38:26.543 --> 01:38:33.444

would be prepared for marriage is something we have 2 big route.

753

01:38:34.373 --> 01:38:46.823

The nuance of we can step back and look into it. And if you're suggesting that we only fulfilled with higher amounts, maybe that's something to look into.

754

01:38:46.823 --> 01:38:51.024

But they have variable arrangements at this particular time.

755

01:38:52.529 --> 01:38:56.969

Yeah, I, I'm just thinking that, yeah, we have to look at this.

756

01:38:56.969 --> 01:39:04.918

With the whole picture of what are we going to do and what changes are we going to make to make our aid more available for customers?

757

01:39:04.918 --> 01:39:08.399

I think this was a, this has been a.

758

01:39:08.399 --> 01:39:13.679

A great solution, especially if we're available, but I.

759

01:39:13.679 --> 01:39:23.819

And what changes we're going to be able to make and how it plays in. I think that's something we'll have to talk about.

760

01:39:23.819 --> 01:39:28.048

Now, and in any way, we can reduce.

761

01:39:28.048 --> 01:39:31.889

Sorry oh, no, please go ahead.

762

01:39:31.889 --> 01:39:36.628

I was just saying this looks appealing to me because any way we can.

763

01:39:36.628 --> 01:39:40.679

Whatever we need to do to try and reduce balances. I.

764

01:39:40.679 --> 01:39:44.128

You just have to be careful of.

765

01:39:44.128 --> 01:39:49.198

Oh, some consequences that we might not be thinking through.

766

01:39:49.944 --> 01:40:00.833

Yeah, it may be a good topic for us if we get together and talk about optimizing the reconnection assistance. Right? Because there's there's probably a priority of how we look at the spend here.

767

01:40:00.833 --> 01:40:12.923

And I think we have to think about all these programs as kind of a complimentary package. Right? It makes sense to the earlier discussion that we use up all of the federal dollars because they don't carry over. We have to use those.

768

01:40:13.344 --> 01:40:28.073

What can we do to maximize those federal dollars, including reconnection assistance? And then, as we look at the remaining programs, how do we make sure that we're maximizing the escalate dollars that are collected or making sure we're not leaving money to be swept?

769

01:40:28.073 --> 01:40:37.764

That's how we've been looking at it. I do think it begged another conversation around the reconnection assistance. Amy, to your point, how do we think about reconnection assistance broadly?

770

01:40:38.094 --> 01:40:45.804

Make sure that those folks who are in another program that they're not losing out, and we're maximizing that assistance.

771

01:40:55.828 --> 01:41:00.059

Okay, thank you very much. Uh, Aaron.

772

01:41:00.059 --> 01:41:06.238

And comment for that update as good conversation.

773

01:41:06.238 --> 01:41:14.578

Let's see, I'm watching Chad. Do we have so.

774

01:41:16.498 --> 01:41:27.658

Is there anything else? Uh, W, we, we've left some things, uh, on the table. I I know we had the discussion about our talked about a separate.

775

01:41:27.658 --> 01:41:37.439

Meeting with utilities on, uh, handling the I. T, side of a disconnect notices and.

776

01:41:37.439 --> 01:41:47.609

So, I think that will be coming out of this that, that we may have something to bring back to the next pack meeting. Hopefully on.

777

01:41:47.609 --> 01:41:53.969

On that so I, I, I see a, at.

778

01:41:53.969 --> 01:41:59.248

Comment in the chat about water assistance, uh.

779

01:41:59.248 --> 01:42:06.389

Martha is asking about any news on water assistance so, uh, I do have a little bit of news.

780

01:42:06.389 --> 01:42:19.798

The 1 of the bills that was put forward this last the veto session on, um, from the legislative Black Caucus.

781

01:42:19.798 --> 01:42:32.458

Uh, it was, I think it was called the economic equity act, I think, and it originally had a section on water and had several different parts.

782

01:42:32.458 --> 01:42:44.154

Per section, I had talked about lead service lines and other things, but for regulated water utilities, it had a type of water lie.

783

01:42:44.154 --> 01:42:55.104

He type thing, and all of the water section was removed before it was passed. So the bill was passed, but the, the section on water was completely removed.

784

01:42:55.823 --> 01:43:04.793

So I think that's still something that's bubbling up in the, in the capital. And I think that it's likely something that in the next couple of years.

785

01:43:05.069 --> 01:43:10.288

Uh, may be coming, but it was not passed during the veto session.

786

01:43:10.288 --> 01:43:14.668

So, the state water assistance, uh, is not.

787

01:43:14.668 --> 01:43:23.578

Uh, eminent the, uh, federal side there there was a, uh, water assistance.

788

01:43:23.578 --> 01:43:32.609

In the stimulus fund, the last stimulus package, and we're expecting to hear on how that's going to be.

789

01:43:32.609 --> 01:43:44.969

You know, when, and how that's going to be sent out, but we have not heard from yet. So, uh, I don't think, uh, right now, uh, there's not a lot I can say other than a.

790

01:43:45.264 --> 01:43:59.423

Right now, with what we know, we, as we assume that we will be working with the local agencies and run it through our star system because our star system is more flexible than than my team.

791

01:43:59.993 --> 01:44:03.804

But there's still a lot to figure out on how to do that.

792

01:44:04.559 --> 01:44:09.088

So that's a that's where we're at, on the water.

793

01:44:09.684 --> 01:44:24.203

Let's see yeah, the bubbling up was, I wish, I thank you for speaking to that I just want to thank you for bringing that up and cause I had some confusion, so I appreciate everyone being willing to spend a minute to talk about it.

794

01:44:24.564 --> 01:44:36.413

I mean, the fact because the fact that it didn't pass would explain why I couldn't find anything else out about it. And then there is still a section as far as according to my most recent research.

795

01:44:36.623 --> 01:44:40.043

There is still a section in the package of.

796

01:44:41.873 --> 01:44:55.524

Stimulus items that the Biden administration is proposing um, but I think some of that is still in in flux. Okay. So that would but I, I, it is correct to say that the last.

797

01:44:56.668 --> 01:45:04.769

Done I can't remember the end of December that does have water system. Correct?

798

01:45:04.769 --> 01:45:13.588

This is Abby in the office David. My understanding is yes, there was water assistance in the most recent.

799

01:45:13.588 --> 01:45:19.679

Lame duck, I guess we could call it the lame duck stimulus that was passed. And my understanding was.

800

01:45:19.679 --> 01:45:27.179

That the instructions were for the money to be distributed to states through D. A. D. H. H. S.

801

01:45:27.179 --> 01:45:32.009

And then administered locally, so that was going to be sort of 1 of my questions for.

802

01:45:32.009 --> 01:45:41.639

You was if you have any idea, if that's going to be the, or if it's going to be or something different than our normal model. But what you just said, indicated.

803

01:45:41.639 --> 01:45:54.743

That you're sort of tentatively anticipating it being the own to distribute those funds. Right? Well, that's assuming that it I mean, if it comes through, right paychecks and a, and it's issue to that's certainly how we would do it.

804

01:45:56.274 --> 01:46:08.663

Okay. Okay. Well, that's good to know. Thank you just for clarification, Abby. Are you talking about Abby and David? Are you both talking about the 25B dollar package that came out at the federal level?

805

01:46:08.663 --> 01:46:15.024

Which included was primarily targeting rental assistance and it had a set aside for utility.

806

01:46:16.469 --> 01:46:23.099

The assistance, including water, or are you talking about something separate? I don't think separate.

807

01:46:23.099 --> 01:46:36.894

That that funding was rental assistance. That's I've got a meeting at 3 o'clock today, because we're, we're moving quickly on that, but it was given the rental assistance money.

808

01:46:37.194 --> 01:46:48.203

It's, it's going through my office, but as a pass through a Illinois housing development authority. So, they will be handling the bulk of the state funding.

809

01:46:48.503 --> 01:47:02.573

However, some local counties and municipalities have received funding directly from us Treasury. I see. Till it till on, I believe champagne got there. So that is separate funding.

810

01:47:02.634 --> 01:47:11.573

I believe there is a smaller part of funding that's for water assistance that was saying stimulus package.

811

01:47:12.323 --> 01:47:20.304

Yeah, David, any updates, as you hear them from or otherwise we would really appreciate be up to date because.

812

01:47:20.399 --> 01:47:32.338

Our office, at least, um, I personally have handled quite a number of water disconnections, municipal and regulated water disconnections in the last couple months. Okay that Abby are you.

813

01:47:34.073 --> 01:47:40.974

Yeah, that's me that's I don't know why I appear that way in Webex but for now.

814

01:47:41.033 --> 01:47:55.524

Okay, well, I'll, uh, I'll make a note of that and I will say that, um, I don't know the number, but there are some of our local agencies are using funding for water assistance.

815

01:47:55.524 --> 01:48:07.134

So, there there may be some out there. Uh, but I do think limited. So, yeah, that's a good point. David. If any other consumer advocates present.

816

01:48:07.529 --> 01:48:16.708

No, or have any list or anything of that nature about which ca, is administer water assistance and which ones don't that would be something I would.

817

01:48:16.708 --> 01:48:20.609

To see, okay.

818

01:48:22.109 --> 01:48:28.408

All right is there any other.

819

01:48:28.408 --> 01:48:39.448

Topic that we need to cover David. This is Abby again just 1 comment looking ahead to our April. What? Our next meeting on April 29.

820

01:48:41.064 --> 01:48:52.524

Given how much uncertainty we're looking at approaching April 1st I know I'm not the only party here that can say that they, their office was in total chaos in April.

821

01:48:53.604 --> 01:49:06.203

I'm wondering if we could, if not have a pickup meeting, have any type of just budget update looking that's closer to that date of April. 1st and then what we receive today. I think it would be helpful.

822

01:49:06.509 --> 01:49:10.229

For those of us that work directly with customers to have.

823

01:49:10.644 --> 01:49:20.064

Another budget update in advance of April 1. okay. Yeah, I think that's a good idea. And we've talked about some, uh, here in this meeting.

824

01:49:20.333 --> 01:49:28.404

We've talked about some possible mid year changes and I think if we did anything like that, we would be, you know, we will definitely be.

825

01:49:28.738 --> 01:49:34.019

I, I, I don't know if we'll convene a meeting, but, uh, what would probably be communicating.

826

01:49:36.509 --> 01:49:40.078

Okay, great. Thanks Steven.

827

01:49:40.078 --> 01:49:45.899

All right, well, we've had a good meeting. I'm going to.

828

01:49:45.899 --> 01:49:51.208

Give everyone just a 2nd to decide if anyone else has anything.

829

01:49:51.208 --> 01:50:04.469

And otherwise Thank you for attending, and as Abby just mentioned, we may see you before but if not, we'll talk to you all in April.

830

01:50:04.469 --> 01:50:08.609

Thank you very much. Everyone. Thanks. Everyone.

831

01:50:08.609 --> 01:50:13.889

Thank you guys thanks. Everybody have a good rest of the day.