



Senate Urban Affairs & Housing Committee

Senator Gene Yaw

Chairman

Adam Pankake, Executive Director

Senate Box 203023 • State Capitol Building • Harrisburg, PA 17120

Phone: 717-787-3280 • Fax: 717-772-0575

BILL ANALYSIS

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 599
SPONSOR: Senator Yaw

PRINTER'S NUMBER: PN 649
REFERRED: March 12, 2009

Summary

- Amends the Housing Finance Agency Law (Act 621 of 1959) and creates the Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement (PHARE) Program to be administered by the PA Housing Finance Agency.

Analysis

- Authorizes funding for the following:
 - Projects that provide safe and sanitary dwellings for sale or rent to low-income or moderate-income individuals or families;
 - Projects that increase the availability or quality of housing for elderly persons;
 - Projects that increase the availability or quality of accessible housing for individuals with disabilities;
 - Projects that prevent or reduce homelessness;
 - Projects to develop and rehabilitate distressed neighborhoods;
 - Programs that provide mortgage or rental assistance including housing counseling, foreclosure prevention, and refinancing products; and
 - Programs to provide loans, low-interest loans or grants to low-income and moderate-income individuals or families for home repairs and improvements;
- Associated activities also eligible to receive funding include:
 - Predevelopment activities including title searches, market studies, planning, and architectural, legal and engineering services;
 - Site preparation including demolition and environmental remediation;
 - Acquisition and disposition of real property; and
 - Construction, alteration and repair of existing structures and infrastructure.
- Preference may be given for projects that involve energy efficiency, green building standards and comprehensive design strategies.
- Provides for the consideration of equitable geographic distribution of the funds.

- Dedicates 30 percent of the funds for housing programs to benefit individuals at or below 50 percent of the median area income.
- Requires PHFA within 90 days of the effective date of this act and by March 15 each year thereafter to adopt a plan that establishes program priorities and a funding distribution method.
- Requires PHFA to publish the proposed program plan in the Pennsylvania Bulletin and submit it to the relevant oversight committees in the Senate and House.
- Prohibits PHFA from using funds appropriated to PHARE to supplant existing agency programs or efforts.

Effective Date

- This act would take effect in 90 days