

HB 534-FN-A - AS INTRODUCED

2023 SESSION

23-0794

02/10

HOUSE BILL ***534-FN-A***

AN ACT relative to water assistance for natural disasters.

SPONSORS: Rep. B. Boyd, Hills. 12; Rep. Petrigno, Hills. 43; Rep. L. Gould, Hills. 2; Rep. Hakken-Phillips, Graf. 12; Sen. Rosenwald, Dist 13

COMMITTEE: Resources, Recreation and Development

ANALYSIS

This bill creates a water assistance fund to be used to repair and replace drinking water treatment sources damaged by natural disasters. The bill also makes an appropriation to the fund.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
 Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Three

AN ACT relative to water assistance for natural disasters.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 New Chapter; Water Assistance for Natural Disasters. Amend RSA by inserting after chapter
2 485-I the following new chapter:

3 CHAPTER 485-J

4 WATER ASSISTANCE FOR NATURAL DISASTERS

5 485-J:1 Purpose Statement. The general court recognizes that natural disasters, such as floods,
6 fires, drought, and other acts of god, can have widespread impacts on drinking water and
7 groundwater. As such, programs to ensure the continued availability of safe drinking water for all
8 New Hampshire citizens are critical to future prosperity. Therefore, to the extent practicable and
9 consistent with the provisions of this chapter, when disasters strike, sources of safe drinking water
10 shall be made available as quickly as possible. In meeting this goal, the general court recognizes
11 that low-income individuals are disproportionately impacted by natural disasters and their ability to
12 replace drinking water sources is often minimal. The general court hereby declares that the purpose
13 of RSA 485-J is to provide for the replacement, repair and treatment of private drinking water
14 sources when needed to protect human health during and after the occurrence of natural disasters.

15 485-J:2 Definitions. In this chapter:

16 I. "Department" means the department of environmental services.

17 II. "Fund" means the water assistance for natural disasters fund established by this chapter.

18 485-J:3 Water Assistance for Natural Disasters Fund.

19 I. There is hereby established in the department the water assistance for natural disasters
20 fund which shall be maintained in the state treasury as distinct and separate from all other funds.
21 All moneys in the fund shall be nonlapsing and continually appropriated to the department of
22 environmental services for the purposes of this chapter.

23 II. The commissioner of environmental services may apply for and accept from any source,
24 gifts; donations of money; grants; legislative appropriations, federal, local, private; and other
25 matching funds and incentives. The moneys collected under this paragraph shall be deposited in the
26 fund established under paragraph I.

27 III. The commissioner shall adopt rules under RSA 541-A relative to the distribution of
28 money from the fund, taking into consideration ability to pay, natural disaster conditions and
29 locations, requirements for repair, replacement and treatment, and other factors as determined by
30 the department. The department may use a portion of appropriated funds to cover the costs of
31 administering this chapter.

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1 2 New Subparagraph; Application of Receipts. Amend RSA 6:12, I(b) by inserting after
2 subparagraph (387) the following new subparagraph:

3 (388) Moneys deposited in the water assistance for natural disasters fund
4 established in RSA 485-J:3.

5 3 Appropriation; Water Assistance for Natural Disasters Fund. The sum of \$2,500,000 for the
6 fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 and the sum of \$2,500,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025
7 are hereby appropriated to the water assistance for natural disasters fund established in RSA 485-J
8 for use by the department of environmental services for the purpose of assisting to fund replacement,
9 repair and treatment of water sources damaged during natural disasters. The governor is
10 authorized to draw a warrant for said sums out of any money in the treasury not otherwise
11 appropriated.

12 4 Effective Date. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.

**HB 534-FN-A- FISCAL NOTE
AS INTRODUCED**

AN ACT relative to water assistance for natural disasters.

FISCAL IMPACT: ☒ State ☐ County ☐ Local ☐ None

STATE:	Estimated Increase / (Decrease)			
	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Appropriation	\$0	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	\$0
Revenue	\$0	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase
Expenditures	\$0	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase	Indeterminable Increase
Funding Source:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Highway <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other - Water Assistance for Natural Disasters Fund			

METHODOLOGY:

This bill creates a nonlapsing and continually appropriated water assistance fund to repair and replace drinking water treatment sources damaged by natural disasters, and makes an appropriation to the fund. The commissioner of environmental services may apply for and accept funds from any source for deposit into the fund.

The Department of Environmental Services assumes the duties and activities to be added under proposed RSA 485-J would be funded with the accompanying appropriation and there would be no additional fiscal impact above the appropriation. The Department indicates there is no expected impact on county of local revenues or expenditures.

AGENCIES CONTACTED:

Department of Environmental Services