

Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024

Explanatory Notes

Short title

The short title of the Bill is the Cheaper Power (Supplementary Appropriation) Bill 2024.

Policy objectives and the reasons for them

Queensland families are experiencing a higher cost of living due to global pressures.

The Government has resolved to provide urgent cost of living relief through rebates applying to power bills. The Government has decided to make these payments within the 2023-24 financial year as unforeseen expenditure to provide urgent relief and ensure that the rebates cannot be revoked or reduced by a future government.

Payments from the Consolidated Fund, including unforeseen expenditure, must be formally authorised under an Act of Parliament in accordance with section 66 of the *Constitution of Queensland 2001*.

The *Appropriation Act 2023* (assented to on 1 September 2023) appropriated the amount of \$78,411,379,000 from the Consolidated Fund for departments for the financial year starting 1 July 2023.

Additional decisions can be made through the year that give rise to additional funding being required from Consolidated Fund. Pursuant to section 35 of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, these additional payments comprise Unforeseen Expenditure, which then needs to be appropriated via legislation.

Achievement of policy objectives

The Bill provides for additional appropriation for 2023-24 to provide funding for the Energy Rebate to support cost of living relief for Queensland households.

Alternative ways of achieving policy objectives

The policy objectives can only be achieved by legislation.

Estimated cost for government implementation

The Bill will provide additional appropriation for the 2023-24 financial year.

The administrative cost to government to implement the Bill will be met by each department from existing budget allocations as implementation of the Bill is considered a fundamental role of departments to provide government services.

Consistency with fundamental legislative principles

The Bill is consistent with fundamental legislative principles.

Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with departments in establishing the appropriations payable to them pursuant to this Bill.

Consistency with legislation of other jurisdictions

The Bill is specific to the State of Queensland and is not complementary to legislation of the Commonwealth or another state.

Notes on provisions

Clause 1 provides for the short title of the Act.

Clause 2(2) provides that for each department, the amount mentioned for the department in Schedule 1 is appropriated for the 2023-24 financial year for the department for application to its departmental services, administered items and equity adjustment.

Clause 2(3) provides for the lapsing of any appropriated amount that was not paid to the department in the financial year or within the further 2 weeks from the total amount mentioned for each department in Schedule 1.

Clause 3(1) provides that a statement is prepared showing, for each department, the amount of unforeseen expenditure paid in the financial year or within the further 2 weeks, the amount mentioned in Schedule 1 appropriated for the department and any lapsed amount from that appropriation.

Clause 3(2) provides that the statement is given to the relevant portfolio committee.

Schedule 1 details the total amount appropriated as unforeseen expenditure for each department for application to its departmental services, administered items and equity adjustment for the financial year 2023-24.

Accountable Officers may apply the total of funds received from the Treasurer for departmental services across the individual services of the department.

Under section 33 of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Treasurer may pay a department's appropriation in amounts different to those set out in the Annual Appropriation Act, provided that the total vote amount is not exceeded. If the Treasurer considers there is a surplus in one or more of the headings of a department for a financial year and a deficiency in another heading or headings of that department, the Treasurer may allocate an amount to one or more of the headings that are deficient from the heading or headings in surplus.