

# HOUSE BILL 1024

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By: **Prince George's County Delegation and Montgomery County Delegation**  
Introduced and read first time: February 5, 2024  
Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Connection Pipe Emergency**  
3 **Replacement Loan Program – Expansion**

4 **PG/MC 101–24**

5 FOR the purpose of expanding the Connection Pipe Emergency Replacement Loan Program  
6 to include certain sewer pipes and diagnostic actions; altering the maximum amount  
7 of a loan that may be made under the Program; altering the total amount of loans  
8 that the Program may provide or have outstanding; altering the amount of funding  
9 and fiscal years for which the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission must  
10 include funding for the Program in the Commission's budget; and generally relating  
11 to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission Connection Pipe Emergency  
12 Replacement Loan Program.

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
14 Article – Public Utilities  
15 Section 23–205  
16 Annotated Code of Maryland  
17 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

18 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
19 Chapter 539 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2018  
20 Section 2

21 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
22 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

23 **Article – Public Utilities**

24 23–205.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.  
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



- 1 (a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.
- 2 (2) "Fund" means the Connection Pipe Emergency Replacement Fund.
- 3 (3) (i) "Pipe" means a water **OR SEWER** service pipe connection located  
4 on a Commission customer's property that connects from the Commission's service  
5 connection to a customer's residence.
- 6 (ii) "Pipe" includes polybutylene pipes.
- 7 (4) "Program" means the Connection Pipe Emergency Replacement Loan  
8 Program.
- 9 (b) The Commission shall establish a Connection Pipe Emergency Replacement  
10 Loan Program.
- 11 (c) The purpose of the Program is to provide loans to residential customers to  
12 **DIAGNOSE AND** finance the replacement of malfunctioning pipes.
- 13 (d) The Program shall include:
- 14 (1) eligibility requirements for participation in the Program, including  
15 eligibility requirements for:
- 16 (i) customers applying to receive a loan through the Program;
- 17 (ii) the type of connection pipe that is being installed to replace the  
18 existing connection pipe; **[and]**
- 19 (iii) the type of malfunction and pipe replacement emergency that  
20 qualifies for the Program; **AND**
- 21 **(IV) THE TYPE OF DIAGNOSTIC ACTION THAT QUALIFIES FOR**  
22 **THE PROGRAM;**
- 23 (2) a requirement that a customer receive notification or have certification  
24 that there is an active leak in **[a] THE pipe THAT WILL BE REPLACED;**
- 25 (3) loan terms and conditions, including an interest rate repayment  
26 schedule and an administrative processing fee;
- 27 (4) a requirement that the replacement of malfunctioning pipes **OR A**  
28 **DIAGNOSTIC ACTION TAKEN** under the Program be performed by a plumber licensed by  
29 the Commission; and

1           (5)    a prohibition on the Commission replacing malfunctioning pipes under  
2 the Program.

3           (e)    (1)    The Program shall provide loans to customers on a first-come,  
4 first-served basis.

5                   (2)    A loan made under the Program may not exceed [~~\$5,000~~] **\$10,000**.

6                   (3)    A customer may not receive more than one loan at a time under the  
7 Program.

8           (f)    (1)    Subject to paragraph (3) of this subsection, the Program shall require a  
9 customer to repay a loan provided under the Program:

10                   (i)    through a separate charge on the customer's water and sewer  
11 bill; or

12                   (ii)   by another method determined by the Commission.

13                   (2)    The Commission may not set a charge greater than an amount that  
14 allows the Commission to recover the costs associated with:

15                   (i)    financing the loan; and

16                   (ii)   administering the Program.

17                   (3)    A person who acquires property subject to a charge under this section  
18 assumes the obligation to pay the charge.

19           (g)    (1)    **(I)**    Subject to paragraph (4) of this subsection, a loan provided under  
20 the Program shall be a lien against the property on which [the] A malfunctioning pipe has  
21 been replaced [that continues] **OR A DIAGNOSTIC ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN.**

22                               **(II)    A LIEN UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH**  
23 **SHALL CONTINUE** until the loan is paid in full to the Commission.

24                   (2)    The Commission shall be [a] **THE** sole holder of the lien established  
25 under paragraph (1) of this subsection.

26                   (3)    (i)    The Commission shall record a lien established under this  
27 subsection in the land records of the county where the property is located.

28                               (ii)   A lien established under this subsection shall secure payment of  
29 a loan, including the principal, interest, late charges, cost of collection, and reasonable  
30 attorney's fees.

1 (iii) Enforcement of a lien established under this subsection shall be  
2 in accordance with the Maryland Contract Lien Act.

3 (4) A lien established under this subsection may not take priority over a  
4 lien, mortgage, deed of trust, or other security interest that is:

5 (i) already attached to the property at the time the lien established  
6 under this subsection is recorded; or

7 (ii) given to secure a loan to:

8 1. purchase the property subject to the lien established  
9 under this subsection; or

10 2. refinance a loan that is already attached to the property  
11 at the time the lien established under this subsection is recorded.

12 (5) The Program may not provide, or at any time have outstanding, more  
13 than ~~[\$1,000,000]~~ **\$2,000,000** total in loans.

14 (h) The Commission shall include ~~[\$100,000]~~ **\$200,000** annually in the  
15 Commission's budget for the Program for fiscal years 2020 through ~~[2029]~~ **2034**.

16 (i) (1) There is a Connection Pipe Emergency Replacement Fund.

17 (2) The purpose of the Fund is to provide funding for the Program.

18 (3) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Fund shall be  
19 administered solely by the Commission or the Commission's designee.

20 (4) The Fund consists of:

21 (i) money appropriated by the Commission from ratepayer funds  
22 only;

23 (ii) any investment earnings of the Fund; and

24 (iii) any other money from any other source accepted for the benefit  
25 of the Fund.

26 (5) The Fund may be used only for:

27 (i) providing loans through the Program; and

28 (ii) the administration of the Program.

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
2 1, 2018. It shall remain effective for a period of [11] **16** years and, at the end of June 30,  
3 **[2029] 2034**, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be  
4 abrogated and of no further force and effect.

5 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June  
6 1, 2024.