

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas *As Engrossed: H3/11/25 H3/18/25 S4/1/25*
95th General Assembly **A Bill**
Regular Session, 2025

HOUSE BILL 1681

By: Representatives Vaught, Milligan, Achor, F. Allen, Andrews, Barker, Barnes, Barnett, Beaty Jr., Beck, Bentley, S. Berry, Breaux, Brooks, K. Brown, M. Brown, N. Burkes, R. Burkes, Joey Carr, Cavanaugh, Childress, Clowney, A. Collins, C. Cooper, Cozart, Crawford, Duffield, Eaton, Ennett, Eubanks, Evans, K. Ferguson, Furman, D. Garner, Gazaway, Gonzales, Gonzales Worthen, Gramlich, Hall, Hawk, Henley, Holcomb, Hollowell, Hudson, L. Johnson, Ladyman, Long, Maddox, Magie, McAlindon, McClure, McCullough, M. McElroy, McGrew, McGruder, McNair, S. Meeks, J. Moore, K. Moore, Nazarenko, Painter, Pearce, Puryear, J. Richardson, R. Scott Richardson, Richmond, Rose, Rye, Schulz, T. Shephard, Springer, Steele, Steimel, Torres, Tosh, Underwood, Unger, Walker, Warren, D. Whitaker, Wing, Wooldridge, Wooten, *Duke*

By: Senators J. Bryant, Hester, *J. Boyd, Caldwell, Crowell, B. Davis, Dees, J. Dotson, J. English, Flippo, S. Flowers, Gilmore, K. Hammer, B. Johnson, M. Johnson, G. Leding, F. Love, M. McKee, R. Murdock, J. Petty, J. Scott, Stone, G. Stubblefield, C. Tucker, D. Wallace*

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT REGARDING THE ARKANSAS NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION; TO ESTABLISH THE WATER AND SEWER
TREATMENT FACILITIES GRANT PROGRAM; TO CREATE THE
WATER AND SEWER TREATMENT FACILITIES GRANT PROGRAM
FUND; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

Subtitle

*TO ESTABLISH THE WATER AND SEWER
TREATMENT FACILITIES GRANT PROGRAM; AND
TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.*

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 19, *Chapter 5, Subchapter 12*, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

19-5-1288. Water and Sewer Treatment Facilities Grant Program Fund.



(a) There is established on the books of the Treasurer of State, the Auditor of State, and the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State a miscellaneous fund to be known as the "Water and Sewer Treatment Facilities Grant Program Fund".

(b) The fund shall consist of any revenues authorized by law.

(c) The fund shall be used by the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission to award grants under the Water and Sewer Treatment Facilities Grant Program established in § 25-43-203.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 25, Chapter 43, Subchapter 2, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

25-43-203. Water and Sewer Treatment Facilities Grant Program.

(a)(1) There is created within the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission the Water and Sewer Treatment Facilities Grant Program to be administered by the commission.

(2) The commission may hire personnel necessary to carry out the duties of administering the program.

(b) The commission shall:

(1) Create an application form to be submitted by eligible water and sewer treatment facilities seeking a matching grant from the program;

(2) Devise an application process that:

(A) Defines the eligibility criteria for a matching grant;

and

(B) Establishes application submission and review processes;

(3) Define a process by which grants may be awarded;

(4) Execute standard legal grant agreements and other documentation governing the disbursement and use of grants; and

(5) Provide a matching grant to eligible water and sewer treatment facilities for infrastructure and improvement projects that are shovel-ready.

(c) A recipient of a grant awarded under this section shall:

(1) Begin the recipient's project within one (1) year of the award of the grant funds; and

(2) Not be eligible for another grant until the awarded grant has been closed out.

(d) Funding under the program shall be awarded as follows:

(1) Eighty percent (80%) shall be awarded for shovel-ready projects in:

(A) Cities of the first class and cities of the second class with a population over one thousand two hundred (1,200); or

(B) Rural water and rural wastewater systems serving a population over one thousand two hundred (1,200); and

(2) Twenty percent (20%) shall be awarded in:

(A) Incorporated towns and cities of the second class with a population of one thousand two hundred (1,200) or less; or

(B) Rural water and rural wastewater systems serving a population of one thousand two hundred (1,200) or less.

(e) The commission shall promulgate rules to implement this section.

(f) The program shall expire five (5) years from the effective date of this act.

(g) The commission shall report annually to the Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee, regarding the status of all grants awarded under the program.

SECTION 3. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that it is in the best interest of the citizens of this state to provide water and sewer grant opportunities for projects to keep Arkansas water systems safe and clean; and that this act is immediately necessary because there is a dire need to protect public health and safety in Arkansas by replacing water and sewer lines that are in disrepair and by providing new access to clean water systems to other citizens. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

(1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

(2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or

(3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

/s/Vaught