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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anthony Portantino, Chair  
2021 - 2022 Regular Session

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### SB 222 (Dodd) - Water Rate Assistance Program

**Version:** May 3, 2021

**Urgency:** No

**Hearing Date:** May 20, 2021

**Policy Vote:** E., U., & C. 11 - 2, E.Q. 5 - 2

**Mandate:** No

**Consultant:** Ashley Ames

**Bill Summary:** This bill would establish the Water Rate Assistance Program to provide water affordability assistance for both drinking water and wastewater services to low-income ratepayers or ratepayers experiencing economic hardship.

\*\*\*\*\* **ANALYSIS ADDENDUM – SUSPENSE FILE** \*\*\*\*\*

The following information is revised to reflect amendments  
adopted by the committee on May 20, 2021

**Fiscal Impact:**

- Very significant ongoing cost pressure, likely in the hundreds of millions of dollars annually (Water Rate Assistance Fund), to provide funding for ratepayer assistance.
- Ongoing cost pressure of \$1.9 million in 2021-22 and \$1.5 million annually thereafter (Water Rate Assistance Fund) for California Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) program modifications, reporting infrastructure, stakeholder engagement, competitive procurement, and third-party auditing of water service providers. CSD notes that its costs would ultimately be dependent on the overall amount of funding provided for rate assistance.
- Ongoing cost pressure of \$1.575 million annually (special fund) for the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to develop and implement regulations associated with an annual fund expenditure plan, provide full consultative services to CSD that include identifying water systems and their needs, and developing a needs assessment analysis related to water affordability issues.

**Committee Amendments:** The amendments would make the provisions of the bill contingent upon an appropriation by the Legislature.

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