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LRB-3924/1 MDK:bjk:rs

2009 SENATE BILL 479

January 22, 2010 - Introduced by Senator RISSER, cosponsored by Representative Pocan. Referred to Committee on Commerce, Utilities, Energy, and Rail.

AN ACT to amend 20.155 (1) (j); and to create 196.31 (2m) of the statutes; relating to: Public Service Commission intervenor grants and making an appropriation.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Current law allows certain persons who are not public utilities to intervene in proceedings before the Public Service Commission (PSC), and allows the PSC to compensate such persons for their intervention costs. This bill requires the PSC to provide \$300,000 in annual grants from the appropriation for such compensation to a nonprofit corporation that has a history of advocating on behalf of residential ratepayers for affordable rates. The grants must be used to offset the general expenses of the corporation, including salary, benefit, rent, and utility expenses. In addition, the bill increases the appropriation to cover the grants, and changes the appropriation from an annual to a biennial appropriation.

For further information see the **state** fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. 20.155(1)(j) of the statutes is amended to read:

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20.155 (1) (j) Intervenor financing <u>and grants</u>. The <u>Biennially, the</u> amounts in the schedule for intervenor financing <u>and grants</u> under s. 196.31. All moneys received for intervenor financing under s. 196.31 (2) shall be credited to this appropriation.

Section 2. 196.31 (2m) of the statutes is created to read:

196.31 (2m) From the appropriation under s. 20.155 (1) (j), the commission shall make an annual grant of \$300,000 to a nonstock, nonprofit corporation that is described under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and that has a history of advocating on behalf of residential ratepayers for affordable rates, for the purpose of offsetting the general expenses of the corporation, including salary, benefit, rent, and utility expenses.

SECTION 3. Fiscal changes.

(1) In the schedule under section 20.005 (3) of the statutes for the appropriation to the public service commission under section 20.155 (1) (j) of the statutes, as affected by the acts of 2009, the dollar amount is increased by \$300,000 for the first fiscal year of the fiscal biennium in which this subsection takes effect to increase funding for the purpose for which the appropriation is made. In the schedule under section 20.005 (3) of the statutes for the appropriation to the public service commission under section 20.155 (1) (j) of the statutes, as affected by the acts of 2009, the dollar amount is increased by \$300,000 for the second fiscal year of the fiscal biennium in which this subsection takes effect to increase funding for the purpose for which the appropriation is made.