

HOUSE BILL NO. 437

INTRODUCED BY CAFERRO

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A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING PAYMENT OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE GRANTS BY ELECTRONIC TRANSFER; AND AMENDING SECTION 53-2-608, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1.** Section 53-2-608, MCA, is amended to read:

**"53-2-608. Method of issuing assistance grants.** (1) ~~Checks in payment of public assistance must be issued by the department of public health and human services upon approved certificates of award and reports of changes of eligible grantees as are forwarded by the county to the state department, and all checks must be mailed to the individual recipient or the appropriate vendor. The checks in payment of public assistance must be issued in the full approved amount for each eligible approved grantee, and the original monthly payment must be from the state public assistance accounts. When an individual or household is determined to be eligible for public assistance under this title, the department shall make payments to the individual or household or to a vendor on behalf of the individual or household in the full amount approved. Payment may be made by check or by electronic transfer, which includes but is not limited to direct deposits to an account at a financial institution and electronic benefit transfer cards.~~ All public assistance checks represent cash on demand at full par value to the recipient and vendor.

(2) Whenever the department ~~of public health and human services~~, acting pursuant to standards established by the department, determines that any otherwise eligible recipient of public assistance has, by reason of any physical or mental condition, ~~such an~~ inability to manage funds and that making payments to the recipient would be contrary to the recipient's welfare, the department may, under standards established under the state plan, make the public assistance payment on behalf of the recipient to another person found by the department to be interested in or concerned with the welfare of the recipient."

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