By: González of El Paso H.B. No. 129

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to customer bill payment assistance programs offered by municipally owned utilities that provide retail water or sewer utility service.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 552, Local Government Code, is amended by adding Section 552.9145 to read as follows:

Sec. 552.9145. CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR MUNICIPALLY OWNED WATER OR SEWER UTILITIES. (a) This section applies only to a municipally owned utility that provides retail water or sewer utility service.

(b) Notwithstanding Section 1502.057(b), Government Code, a municipally owned utility may provide a bill payment assistance program for retail water or sewer utility service customers:

(1) who are members of a household with a total annual income that is at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines;

(2) who are persons with a disability, as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 12102;

(3) who are veterans of the United States armed forces;

(4) who are 60 years of age or older; or

(5) whose service was disconnected for nonpayment by any utility of the municipality three or more times during a

calendar year or who otherwise have a history of service disconnection for nonpayment, as determined by the municipality.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2027.