

KS to loan up to \$100M to cities with huge energy costs

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — Kansas legislators have quickly created a low-interest loan program for cities to help them cover a spike in costs associated with providing heat and electricity to residents during last month's intense cold snap.

The state Senate approved, 37-1, on Wednesday to allow the state to loan out \$100 million of its idle funds immediately to cities that have community owned electric and natural gas utilities. Its vote came hours after the House passed the measure, 124-0.

Governor Kelly signed the bill Wednesday evening.

Subzero temperatures led to a big spike in demand for natural gas, and other problems, such as freezing equipment, made gas hard to obtain, causing prices to jump.

The city of Denison, with about 190 residents, was billed about \$241,000 for gas in February, when its bill last year was about \$4,100. City Clerk Yvonne Hamer, in written testimony, said without help, the city would "go under" after 134 years.

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