

grants to small communities. The grants will be authorized for up to one-half the eligible project cost. It applies to communities under 800 inhabitants who demonstrate serious financial hardships. This, by the way, is not defined anywhere currently in statute and would have to be determined by the Department of Environmental Control. But the Department of Environmental Control would submit to the Governor and the Clerk of the Legislature a semiannual report on January 1st and July 1 of each fiscal year showing the financial status of the program, fund balance, list of grants, time of payouts, and necessary appropriations required to meet those grants, and, yet, as I indicated before, this was drafted by Rick Bay over at DEC who administers the Wastewater Treatment Program. The program would come out of a separate cash fund and would not affect the State Revolving Loan Fund nor involve the federal requirements associated with the revolving fund. Senator Landis had come to me with concerns about this amendment saying, the last thing I really need on this bill right now is an A bill, and I appreciate that, and we tried to take care of that, and thought we had it taken care of yet this morning, Senator Landis. And as I indicated to you just a few minutes ago, after we consulted again with DEC, it was their wish that we not do that and, again, I think it is primarily because of some of the concerns about where we are in terms of matching these funds, the uncertainty of our situation with the federal government, and so I apologize to you for not being able to do this at this time without an A bill, but I think this is, again, the only way that makes this particular mechanism accessible to small communities. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if you stood up and opposed me on this but I feel an obligation to bring this to the body out of my concern for the future, particularly, of small communities who I don't think can really use 311 or address what are very serious concerns. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Any discussion? Senator Landis.

SENATOR LANDIS: I accept the amendment. It is a funding mechanism. At this point, there is not an A bill. If it is offered, I may oppose the A bill and ask that it be done in the mainline budget, but we have some time to do that. I accept the goal that is trying to be achieved here. I approve the amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Those in favor of the adoption of the amendment please vote aye, opposed nay. Voting on the