

**§ 119-63.6. Use of assessments; reporting.**

(a) The Foundation shall use the funds to promote the common good, welfare, and advancement of the propane industry, including, but not limited to, the following activities and programs: education, training, safety compliance, equipment replacement for low-income customers, marketing, advertising, promotion, and customer rebates to encourage energy-efficient appliance and equipment purchases by residential, commercial, or agricultural consumers. The Foundation shall consult with the Alliance regarding its proposed use of the funds. In addition, the Foundation shall consult with agricultural industry trade associations and other organizations representing agricultural consumers of propane to ensure that some programs and activities benefit the agriculture industry.

(b) No funds collected pursuant to this Article shall be used in any manner for influencing State or federal legislation or for lobbying.

(c) No more than ten percent (10%) of the funds collected pursuant to this Article shall be used by the Foundation for administrative expenses relating to the expenditure of the funds. The Foundation may advance costs of conducting referenda pursuant to this Article and reimburse those costs from the assessment funds. Costs of conducting referenda, litigation expenses incurred in connection with actions authorized by G.S. 119-63.5, and the cost of the audit required by subsection (e) of this section are not administrative expenses.

(d) All funds received by the Foundation pursuant to this Article shall be kept in separate accounts from other Foundation funds. The Foundation shall keep minutes, books, and records that clearly reflect all of the acts and transactions of the Foundation with respect to use and expenditure of the funds. The Foundation shall submit a written report annually, not later than March 31 of each year, to the Commissioner on the use and expenditure of the funds received pursuant to this Article.

(e) The books and records of the Foundation shall be audited by a certified public accountant each fiscal year with respect to the receipt and use of the funds. Copies of such audit shall be provided to the Commissioner, to the Alliance, and to any other interested party upon written request. The Foundation may pay for the audit from the assessment funds. (2013-299, s. 1; 2022-51, s. 20(b).)