

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1357

As Reported By House Committee On:
Environmental Affairs

Title: An act relating to public water supply system operators.

Brief Description: Modifying certification of public water supply system operators.

Sponsors: Representatives Rust, Horn, Roland and Valle; by request of Department of Health.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Environmental Affairs, February 11, 1993, DPS.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Rust, Chair; Flemming, Vice Chair; Horn, Ranking Minority Member; Bray; Foreman; Hansen; Holm; L. Johnson; J. Kohl; and Linville.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Van Luven, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Edmondson; Roland; and Sheahan.

Staff: Harry Reinert (786-7110).

Background: Public water systems having 100 or more connections, or having 15 or more connections and using a surface water supply, are required to have a certified operator. The Department of Health and the water and wastewater operator certification board of examiners oversee the operator certification process. Fees for operator certification are established by the department based on the cost to the department of running the certification program. Operator certification fees are deposited in the general fund.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The waterworks operator certification account is established. All fees received by the Department of Health for water system operator certification are deposited in the account. The account is subject to appropriation.

The Department of Health may assess fees on public water systems, in addition to fees on certified operators, to operate the water system operator certification program. The department shall establish two schedules of fees, one for applicants for certified operator and one for public water systems, to pay for the program.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill gives the department explicit authority to impose an assessment on water systems to pay a part of the cost of the operator certification program. The substitute bill also requires that the funds in the account must be used to pay for the program.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The need for high quality water systems operators is essential. This bill will make the certification program self-supporting. Public water systems, which benefit from the certified operators, are willing to pay part of the cost of the program.

Testimony Against: None presented.

Witnesses: Denise Lahmann, City of Centralia (pro); B. David Clark, Department of Health (pro); Russell W. Glaser, Certification Board (pro); Pat Wiles, Harbor Water (pro); Bert Lysen, Washington State Association of Water (pro); and Joe Daniels, Washington State Association of Water (pro).