

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2320

As Reported By House Committee On:
Environmental Affairs

Title: An act relating to review and approval of sewerage or disposal systems.

Brief Description: Reviewing sewerage or disposal systems.

Sponsors: Representatives Holm, Horn, Rust and Cothorn; by request of Department of Ecology.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Environmental Affairs, January 20, 1994, DP.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Rust, Chair; Flemming, Vice Chair; Horn, Ranking Minority Member; Van Luven, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bray; Edmondson; Foreman; Hansen; Holm; L. Johnson; J. Kohl; Linville; Roland; and Sheahan.

Staff: Rick Anderson (786-7114).

Background: Current state law requires the Department of Ecology to review all plans and specifications relating to the construction or modification of sewage treatment plants. The department administers the Centennial Clean Water Account which, in part, provides local governments with funds to construct municipal sewage systems.

The 1993 capital budget included a provision that directed the Department of Ecology to streamline its grants and loan programs to reduce administrative costs. In response to this legislative directive, the department created a grants streamlining team consisting of representatives from several agency programs and two local government stakeholders. The team met throughout the year and proposed several regulatory changes and one legislative change.

Summary of Bill: The bill authorizes the Department of Ecology to delegate authority to local governments for the review and approval of engineering reports and other documents. The delegation authority applies only to the construction or modification of sewer systems and industrial

pretreatment systems. A local government may be delegated authority to review and approve engineering reports if it meets criteria established by the department.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 18, 1994.

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

Testimony For: Delegating authority to local governments will reduce administrative costs incurred by local governments and the Department of Ecology. Many local governments are capable of reviewing and approving technical engineering documents.

Testimony Against: The Department of Ecology should retain authority to review and approve engineering reports. Delegation of these detailed reports may result in a deterioration of water quality due to the lack of state oversight. The delegation of authority to review and approve less technical documents can occur without jeopardizing water quality.

Witnesses: Naki Stevens, People for Puget Sound (con); Linda Crerar, Washington State Department of Ecology (pro); and Ed Thorpe, Coalition for Clean Water (pro).