

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**ESHB 1785**

**AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON TRADE, TECHNOLOGY & ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT, APRIL 1, 1993**

**Brief Description:** Creating jobs to restore and enhance Washington's estuaries, waterways, forests, and watersheds.

**SPONSORS:** House Committee on Environmental Affairs (originally sponsored by Representatives Locke, J. Kohl, Rust, Jacobsen, Wineberry, Shin, Dunshee, Holm, Pruitt, Jones, Finkbeiner, King, Basich, Quall, Orr, Johanson, Leonard and Anderson)

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRADE, TECHNOLOGY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Skratek, Chairman; Sheldon, Vice Chairman; M. Rasmussen, and Williams.

**Staff:** Jack Brummel (786-7428)

**Hearing Dates:** March 24, 1993; April 1, 1993

**BACKGROUND:**

According to a recent Massachusetts Institute of Technology study, states with strong environmental programs also have the healthiest economies. The study buttresses the belief of many economic development practitioners in Washington State that the long-term health of our economy depends on the health, sustainable management and development of our natural resources. Washington's water resources provide livelihood for thousands of citizens, yet are threatened by continuing degradation.

Job creation proponents have agreed with environmentalists that creating jobs for the unemployed that enhance the water quality of the state's watersheds can both increase the long-term viability of water-based industries and give the unemployed new career opportunities.

**SUMMARY:**

An Interagency Council on Environmental and Forest Restoration is created within the Office of the Governor. The 15 member council consists of the Governor, who serves as chair, representatives of nine state agencies and representatives of tribes, labor, environmental groups, cities, and counties. Non-agency members are not allowed to participate in funding

decisions. The council is to be staffed by the Department of Community Development.

The environment and forest restoration account is established in the State Treasury. The account is to be funded by principal and interest repayments, and through unspecified state and federal funds. Money in the account is subject to legislative appropriation. The Department of Community Development is to administer the account. At least 10 percent of annual revenues are to be used for the Washington Conservation Corps. No more than 3 percent can be used for administration.

Funding of environmental and forest restoration projects for fiscal year 1994 is to be through the operating and capital budgets. The Governor is to consider (1) placing unanticipated federal funds into the environmental and forest restoration account, or (2) directing agencies to use such funds in a manner consistent with the criteria established in the bill.

The council is to: (1) assist state and local agencies in implementing effective restoration projects; (2) evaluate unemployment profile data; (3) review projects funded in fiscal year 1994 for consistency with the criteria established in the bill; and (4) make recommendations to streamline grant administration for programs that address environmental and forest restoration.

Beginning in 1994, the council is to make funding decisions on environmental and forest restoration projects. Projects funded must meet specified criteria, such as: improving water and habitat quality using unemployed workers and high-risk youth; creating labor intensive jobs; and implementing state or federal plans. The council is to avoid funding projects that include rule-making, planning, or public education activities.

The Employment Security Department is to work with the council to recruit unemployed workers for projects funded under the act.

The Puget Sound Water Quality Authority and the departments of Ecology and Natural Resources must jointly create one watershed analysis team in western Washington and one in eastern Washington. The teams are directed to evaluate the interactions of water quality and water use.

The section establishing watershed action teams is null and void unless funded in the budget.

#### **SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:**

The 15 member interagency council is replaced with a 7 member Environmental Enhancement and Job Creation Task Force. The Governor is to designate staff for the task force. The task force will make distributions from the environmental and forest restoration account. Project criteria are modified.

Provisions relating to watershed action teams are removed.  
The Puget Sound Water Quality Authority sunsets in 1999.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested February 9, 1993

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

Protecting the environment does create jobs. We can use economic development tools to save the environment. Investment in watershed protection saves clean-up problems downstream. This is a good long-term program; it should have funding from a dedicated account.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Representative Locke, prime sponsor; Naki Stevens, People for Puget Sound (pro); Linda Arcuki, Washington Association of Conservation Districts (pro)