

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5505

As Reported By House Committee On:

Agriculture & Ecology
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to water supply and growth management.

Brief Description: Directing agencies to assist growers in securing safe and reliable water sources.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Agriculture & Environment (originally sponsored by Senators Morton, Rasmussen and Swecker).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Ecology: 4/2/97, 4/3/97 [DPA];
Appropriations: 4/5/97 [DPA(APP w/o AGECE)s].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ECOLOGY

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Chandler, Chairman; Parlette, Vice Chairman; Schoesler, Vice Chairman; Linville, Ranking Minority Member; Cooper; Delvin; Koster; Mastin and Sump.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; and Regala.

Staff: Kenneth Hirst (786-7105).

Background: Water System Planning. State law directs the State Board of Health to adopt rules establishing requirements for public drinking water systems, including requirements for water system planning. The rules adopted by the board require public water systems with 1000 services or more, systems experiencing problems, expanding systems, and new systems to submit water plans for review and approval by the Department of Health (DOH). For an area designated as a critical water supply service area, a water utility committee must develop a coordinated water system plan which provides for maximum integration and coordination of public water system facilities in the area. Plans for each of the systems within the area and the coordinated plan for the area must also be approved by the DOH.

Coordinated Approval by Ecology and Health. Within the areas served by such a plan, the Department of Ecology (DOE) and the DOH must coordinate approval procedures to ensure compliance and consistency with the approved water system plan.

OFM Population Projections: GMA Planning. At least once every 10 years, the Office of Financial Management (OFM) must prepare 20-year growth management planning population projections for counties planning under the state's Growth Management Act (GMA). Each county planning under the GMA must designate urban growth areas within which urban growth is to be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature. Based on the OFM growth management population projection made for the county, the urban growth areas in the county must include areas and densities sufficient to permit the urban growth that is projected to occur in the county for the succeeding 20-year period.

Summary of Amended Bill: If requested by an applicant for a water right, the director of the DOE must provide the applicant assistance in obtaining or developing an adequate and appropriate supply of water consistent with the land use permitted for the area in which the water is to be used and the population forecast for the area by the OFM. If the applicant is a public water supply system, the supply being sought must also be used in a manner consistent with watershed and water system plans. Providing this assistance for public water supply systems can be accomplished through assistance in the creation of municipal interties and transfers, additional storage capabilities, enhanced conservation efforts, and added efficiency standards for using existing supplies.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill: The substitute bill requires such assistance only for public water supply systems and allows it if an application by any entity is denied. The amendment requires the assistance for all applicants, upon request.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: A water utility should be able to get assistance from the DOE when it needs to provide water to respond to the population forecasted for its area.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Paul Parker, Washington State Association of Counties.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended by Committee on Appropriations and without amendment by Committee on Agriculture & Ecology. Signed by 27 members: Representatives Alexander, Vice Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Wensman, Vice Chairman; H. Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Doumit, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Gombosky, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Benson; Carlson; Chopp; Cody; Cooke; Crouse; Grant; Keiser; Kenney; Kessler; Lambert; Linville; Lisk; Mastin; McMorris; Parlette; Poulsen; D. Schmidt; Sehlin; Sheahan and Tokuda.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Regala.

Staff: Nancy Stevenson (786-7137).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee on Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee on Agriculture & Ecology: Null and void language was added making provisions of the legislation dependent on funding in the 1997-99 Omnibus Appropriations Act.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Testimony For: It would be helpful to have an incentive in the long term to serve our population's needs. There is a role for the Department of Ecology to assist communities in figuring out where their water is going to come from. The department should help with rural water supply problems. People don't base life decisions, like where to live, on where there is water. The bill is worded to say that the department is to "help get the applicant water," not get the applicant a water right. Originally the bill was drafted to help municipalities; however, all beneficial uses should be treated equally.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Paul Parker, Washington State Association of Counties; and Dick Ducharme, Building Industry Association of Washington and Yakima Growers & Shippers.