

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 1264

As Passed House:

March 17, 1999

Title: An act relating to the combining of water and sewer districts.

Brief Description: Making corrections regarding combining water-sewer districts.

Sponsors: Representatives D. Schmidt, Scott, Mulliken, Fisher, Quall, Wolfe and Schoesler.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Local Government: 2/4/99, 2/22/99 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/17/99, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Makes changes and technical corrections related to consolidation of water district and sewer district laws.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Mulliken, Republican Co-Chair; Scott, Democratic Co-Chair; Doumit, Democratic Vice Chair; Mielke, Republican Vice Chair; Edwards; Ericksen; Fisher and Fortunato.

Staff: Caroleen Dineen (786-7156).

Background:

Water districts are units of local government initially authorized in 1913 to provide potable water facilities, sanitary sewers, drainage facilities, and street lighting. Sewer districts are units of local government initially authorized in 1941 to provide sanitary sewers, drainage facilities, and potable water facilities. Sewer district laws are almost identical with water district laws.

Legislation enacted in 1996 and effective July 1, 1997, consolidated water district laws with sewer district laws and made a number of technical changes to these laws. Among other changes, the term "sewer system," which had been defined to include both sanitary sewers and drainage systems, was altered to apply only to sanitary sewer systems, and separate provisions were added for drainage systems.

Summary of Bill:

A variety of changes are made relating to the consolidation of water district laws with sewer district laws. The distinction between sanitary sewer systems and drainage systems initiated in the 1996 legislation consolidating sewer district and water district statutes is continued. Various laws are amended to make this distinction.

Provisions relating to the use of the small works roster process for work ordered with a cost from \$5,000 to less than \$50,000 are clarified. Further, the provision subjecting financial records of associations of water-sewer district commissions to audit by the state auditor is eliminated.

The authority for water-sewer districts to reject bids for sales of unnecessary property is limited to rejections made for good cause.

References to either "water districts" or "sewer districts" are altered to "water-sewer districts," and numerous technical changes are made to a variety of statutes related to water-sewer districts.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: (Original bill) This bill includes numerous technical corrections to clean up the statutes after the 1996 merger of the water district and sewer district titles. There are no policy changes, as the substantive provisions were in either both of the former water district and sewer district statutes.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (Original bill) Representative Schmidt, prime sponsor; Joe Daniels, Washington Association of Sewer/Water Districts; and Steve Lindstrom, Sno-King Water Alliance.