

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 3001

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to the water conservation account.

Brief Description: Creating the water conservation account.

Sponsors: Representatives Linville, Chandler and Skinner.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 3/2/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes the Water Conservation Account and allows only the Public Works Board or its designee to make expenditures from the account.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 24 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Doumit, 1st Vice Chair; Fromhold, 2nd Vice Chair; Sehlin, Ranking Minority Member; Boldt, Buck, Clements, Cody, Cox, Dunshee, Grant, Kagi, Kenney, Kessler, Linville, Lisk, Mastin, McIntire, Pearson, Pflug, Ruderman, Schual-Berke, Talcott and Tokuda.

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

Staff: Jeff Olsen (786-7157).

Background:

Federal law authorizes the enrollment of lands in a conservation reserve program to assist landowners to conserve and improve soil and water resources. Landowners eligible to participate under the program agree to restore the hydrology of the enrolled land, establish wetlands, grassland, vegetative cover, or other habitat improvements.

The Public Works Board, within the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic

Development, is authorized to make low-interest or interest-free loans to finance the repair, replacement, or improvement of public works systems.

Summary of Bill:

The Water Conservation Account is created in the custody of the State Treasurer as a nonappropriated account. Federal funding received for water conservation under Title 16, U.S.C., Section 3831 must be deposited in the account. The Legislature may appropriate funds to the account. Only the Public Works Board or its designee may make expenditures from the account.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: The Farm bill being considered in Congress may include \$300 million for water conservation, and this fund would be a placeholder for those funds.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Hertha Lund, Washington State Farm Bureau; and Kathleen Collins, Washington Water Policy Alliance.