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## Local Government Committee

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### SSB 6208

**Brief Description:** Regarding temporary water-sewer connections.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Roach, Kastama and McCaslin).

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allows a water-sewer district to collect a connection charge from a property owner related to the installation of a temporary connection to a water and/or sewer system.</li><li>• Requires that connection charges for a temporary water and/or sewer connection be refunded to a property owner by a water-sewer district in the event permanent connection facilities are not constructed within fifteen years of payment.</li></ul>



**Hearing Date:** 2/25/04

**Staff:** Thamas Osborn (786-7129).

#### 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.

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.

Water-sewer districts (districts) are provided with statutory authorization to exercise specific powers necessary for the construction and maintenance of a water and/or sewer system (system). One of the powers granted to districts is the power to fix rates and charges for the service they supply. When a property owner seeks to be connected to a district's system, the district may charge the property owner for the actual cost of the connection, as well as a "reasonable connection charge" representing the property owner's equitable share of the cost of the system. The connection charge must be calculated as a pro rata share of the sum of three cost centers, as follows:

- the cost of existing facilities;
- the cost of facilities planned in an adopted comprehensive plan and which are to be constructed within the succeeding ten years; and
- other costs the district must pay that are directly attributable to the improvements required by the property owners seeking to connect to the system.

**Summary of Bill:**

In the event a property owner seeks connection with a system in which a district has neither (a) the permanent facilities necessary to facilitate the connection, nor (b) plans for building such permanent facilities in the future, the district may permit connection to the system through *temporary* facilities. Under these circumstances, a district may collect from the property owner a proportionate share of the projected future cost of the facilities that would be needed in order to *permanently* connect the property to the system. The amount collected, including interest, must be held by the district for contribution to the future development of the permanent local facilities needed to serve the property. If these permanent facilities are not constructed within 15 years of the date of payment of the fee by the property owner, the amount collected, including accrued interest, must be returned to the property owner.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.