

1539

Sponsor(s): Representatives Armstrong, Schoesler, Chandler, Clements and Newhouse

Brief Description: Altering appeal procedures for water-related actions of the department of ecology.

**HB 1539 - DIGEST**

Recognizes that in many cases the value of real property directly depends upon the amount of water that is available for use on that property.

Recognizes that water rights are a type of property right in which many different parties may assert an interest. Current statutes require many property rights actions in which different parties assert interests, such as actions for partition or eminent domain, to be filed in superior court.

Finds that informal procedures such as mediation and fact-finding have been employed successfully in other areas of the law, and may produce positive results in certain types of water disputes.

Finds that property owners should have a choice to select informal or formal hearings before the pollution control hearings board, and that relinquishment proceedings should be appealed to the court of appeals.