

2564-S

Sponsor(s): House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources (originally sponsored by Representatives McCoy, Linville, Conway, Rockefeller, Sullivan, McDermott, Ormsby, Hunt, Lovick, Moeller, Kenney, McIntire, Kagi and Clibborn)

Brief Description: Authorizing a pilot program for the settlement of water rights.

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(SEE ALSO PROPOSED 2ND SUB)

Finds that state water law must take into account rights to water based in both state and federal law, including treaties between the federal government and Indian tribes located within the state of Washington.

Finds that it is in the interest of the people of the state, the nation, and Indian tribes located within the state to achieve greater certainty and security regarding the respective water rights based on state and federal law.

Finds that the federal government is actively pursuing resolution of federal and tribal water rights, and has initiated and proposed both informal and formal proceedings to determine federal and tribal rights to water in Washington state.

Declares an intent to direct the state to actively participate in these federal proceedings to represent the interests of the state, to protect rights of water users that rely on state-based water rights, and to ensure that these processes are conducted in a fair and respectful manner.

Requires the state negotiating team to report its findings and recommendations to the governor and appropriate legislative committees by January 1, 2006.

Appropriates the sum of two hundred thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, from the general fund for the fiscal year ending July 1, 2005, to the governor's office to defray the costs of forming and operating the negotiating team established in this act and to pay an equitable share of the costs of facilitation by the United States Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution.