

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## EHB 2105

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As of March 18, 2005

**Title:** An act relating to including the Hood Canal area in the state's on-site sewage grant program.

**Brief Description:** Including Hood Canal in the on-site sewage grant program.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Chase, DeBolt, Eickmeyer, Hinkle, Kessler, O'Brien, McCune, Ormsby, Hankins, Clements, Hasegawa, Ericks, Upthegrove, Moeller, Flannigan, Appleton, Hunt and McCoy.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/11/05, 89-5.

**Committee Activity:** Water, Energy & Environment: 3/23/05.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

**Staff:** Sam Thompson (786-7413)

**Background:** State oyster reserves in Puget Sound and Willapa Bay furnish shellfish to growers and processors and stock public beaches. Proceeds from leases of reserves and shellfish sales from reserves are deposited into the oyster reserve land account.

The Puget Sound Action Team (PSAT) administers a shellfish-on-site sewage grant program for Puget Sound and for Pacific and Grays Harbor counties. Grants improve on-site sewage systems that could adversely affect water quality in shellfish growing areas. Funding is provided from the oyster reserve land account. PSAT agreements with participating local health jurisdictions establish income eligibility requirements for applicants and specify other terms and conditions.

In recent years, low dissolved oxygen concentrations and significant fish death events have been recorded in Hood Canal. In May 2004, the PSAT and the Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC)--a group of county and tribal governments established to address water quality problems and natural resource issues--issued a report assessing human-influenced nitrogen sources in Hood Canal. The report identified six major sources, including human sewage, and recommended corrective actions.

**Summary of Bill:** The existing shellfish on-site sewage grant program administered by the Puget Sound Action Team (PSAT) is expanded to include the Hood Canal area and is renamed the on-site sewage grant program. The PSAT may award program grants in Jefferson, Kitsap, and Mason Counties within watersheds draining into Hood Canal. For grants in these three counties, the PSAT may use state appropriated funds, federal funds received for the program, and funds generated from oyster reserve lands located in the counties.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available for original bill.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

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