

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 5142

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Environmental Health, Select

**Title:** An act relating to the disbursement of funds by air pollution control agencies.

**Brief Description:** Modifying the disbursement of funds by air pollution control agencies.

**Sponsors:** Senators Fraser and Swecker.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Select Committee on Environmental Health: 3/20/07 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Allows disbursement of monies collected for an air pollution control authority through warrants drawn by the authority or the designated county auditor.

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### HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Campbell, Chair; Hudgins, Vice Chair; Newhouse, Ranking Minority Member; Sump, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chase, Hailey, Hunt, Morrell and Wood.

**Staff:** Brad Avy (786-7289).

**Background:**

Local air pollution control authorities (authorities) are established by the Washington Clean Air Act. Authorities are responsible for carrying out specified duties and powers relating to air quality. Each county has an authority created within it; however, some county authorities are inactive. Counties with inactive authorities are served by the Department of Ecology. Seven multi-county authorities have been formed by county boards of commissioners by combining a county authority with one or more adjacent county authorities. Each authority is governed by a Board of Directors (Board).

The treasurer of each component city, town, or county within an authority must create a separate fund for monies collected for the activated authorities. These monies must be

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forwarded to the treasurer of the county designated by the Board. The designated treasurer must establish and maintain these funds as authorized by the Board. Money must be disbursed upon warrants drawn by a board-designated county auditor. The respective county must be reimbursed for the services rendered by their treasurer and auditor.

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**Summary of Bill:**

Monies collected for an air pollution control authority may be disbursed upon warrants drawn by an authority or designated county auditor.

If an authority chooses to use a county auditor for the disbursement of funds, the Board must reimburse the county for services performed by the auditor.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The law says that air authorities have to go through the county to cut checks to vendors. Even so, many of the local air pollution authorities currently issue their own checks based on differing legal interpretations. The bill allows the flexibility for local air pollution control authorities to issue their own warrants if they wish, though it's not mandatory.

The proposed legislation provides for: improved efficiencies and effectiveness for air pollution control agencies; reduced photocopying and duplicate record keeping; less process and a more efficient use of taxpayer dollars; faster payment to businesses for services provided; and better alignment of air agencies' financial services. Counties will benefit if they do not issue warrants since currently they do not fully recoup their costs.

The State Auditor's Office recommended that our air agency start processing its own warrants to reduce costs and improve efficiencies and to save the amount paid to the county every year. The proposed legislation does nothing to erode or degrade any of the built-in checks and balances.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Fraser, prime sponsor; and Richard Stedman, Olympia Region Clean Air Agency.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.