

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5940

As of February 19, 2009

Title: An act relating to publicly owned industrial wastewater treatment facilities.

Brief Description: Concerning publicly owned industrial wastewater treatment facilities.

Sponsors: Senator Honeyford.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Water & Energy: 2/18/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, WATER & ENERGY

Staff: Karen Epps (786-7424)

Background: The Clean Water State Revolving Fund program and the section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program were authorized under the Clean Water Act Amendments of 1987. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides money to capitalize state loan funds. This funding is most commonly used to support wastewater treatment systems, nonpoint source controls, and estuary protection activities. Under the section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program, states, territories, and Indian tribes receive grant money to support a wide variety of activities including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and monitoring to assess the success of specific nonpoint source implementation projects. The Department of Ecology (Ecology) is the administrator of these programs in Washington. Ecology also administers a third source of funding for water quality projects.

The Washington State Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund Loan Program is supported by money from EPA, state match, and interest and loan repayments. The Federal Clean Water Act Section 319 Nonpoint Source Grant Program receives money from the EPA and the federal General Fund. Finally, the Centennial Clean Water Grant Program receives money from the Water Quality Account, the State Building Construction Account, and the State and Local Toxics Account. Ecology manages the annual application and funding process of these three funding sources through an integrated funding approach. As such, there is one combined funding cycle, one application form and submittal period, and a combined funding list.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill: Ecology may award grants or provide loans to publicly-owned industrial wastewater treatment facilities that relieve a city of the burden of processing industrial wastewater under the Centennial Clean Water Grant Program, the Federal Clean Water Act Section 319 Nonpoint-source Grant Program, and the Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund Loan Program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 12, 2009.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The city of Sunnyside reached an agreement with the Port District in Sunnyside in 1990 to have the Port District handle the food processors' wastewater at the Port's treatment facility in order to relieve the city of its need to upgrade its existing treatment facility. Previously, the Port of Sunnyside has received a grant under one of these programs, but now Ecology says they are no longer eligible. This bill would only give them the ability to apply for these grants and loans. There are no guarantees for anyone, but they would like to be able to compete for these funds. This wastewater treatment facility treats waste from 15 different food processing companies which employ about 1,700 people in Sunnyside. Sunnyside only has a population of about 15,000 people. These food processing companies are a huge economic industry for Sunnyside. Allowing the Port to apply for these grants and loans is critical in order for the Port to continue to support these companies.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Honeyford, prime sponsor; Amber Hanson, St. Clair Woodworth, Port of Sunnyside.