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SENATE BILL 6637

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State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Senator Warnick

Read first time 02/03/16. Referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

1 AN ACT Relating to the public works board regarding the public  
2 works assistance account program interest rates, project ranking,  
3 board membership, and other requirements; amending RCW 43.155.030,  
4 43.155.060, 43.155.065, 43.155.068, and 43.155.070; and adding a new  
5 section to chapter 43.155 RCW.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

7 **Sec. 1.** RCW 43.155.030 and 1999 c 153 s 58 are each amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 (1) The public works board is hereby created.

10 (2) The board shall be composed of (~~thirteen~~) seventeen members  
11 appointed by the governor for terms of four years, except that five  
12 members initially shall be appointed for terms of two years. The  
13 board shall include: (a) Three members, two of whom shall be elected  
14 officials and one shall be a public works manager, appointed from a  
15 list of at least six persons nominated by the association of  
16 Washington cities or its successor; (b) three members, two of whom  
17 shall be elected officials and one shall be a public works manager,  
18 appointed from a list of at least six persons nominated by the  
19 Washington state association of counties or its successor; (c) three  
20 members appointed from a list of at least six persons nominated  
21 jointly by the Washington public utility districts association and a

1 state association of water-sewer districts, or their successors; (d)  
2 one member from each of the two major caucuses of the house of  
3 representatives to be appointed by the speaker of the house of  
4 representatives and one member from each of the two major caucuses of  
5 the senate to be appointed by the president of the senate: (i) Each  
6 member of the house of representatives who is appointed to the public  
7 works board under this chapter may designate another member from the  
8 house of representatives to take his or her place on the board for  
9 meetings at which the member will be absent, as long as the  
10 designated member belongs to the same caucus; the designee shall have  
11 all powers to vote and participate in board deliberations as have the  
12 other board members; (ii) each member of the senate who is appointed  
13 to the public works board under this chapter may designate another  
14 member from the senate to take his or her place on the board for  
15 meetings at which the member will be absent, as long as the  
16 designated member belongs to the same caucus; (iii) the designee  
17 shall have all powers to vote and participate in board deliberations  
18 as have the other board members; and ((+d)) (e) four members  
19 appointed from the general public. In appointing the four general  
20 public members, the governor shall endeavor to balance the  
21 geographical composition of the board and to include members with  
22 special expertise in relevant fields such as public finance,  
23 architecture and civil engineering, and public works construction.  
24 The governor shall appoint one of the general public members of the  
25 board as chair. The term of the chair shall coincide with the term of  
26 the governor.

27 (3) Staff support to the board shall be provided by the  
28 department.

29 (4) Members of the board shall receive no compensation but shall  
30 be reimbursed for travel expenses under RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

31 (5) If a vacancy on the board occurs by death, resignation, or  
32 otherwise, the governor shall fill the vacant position for the  
33 unexpired term. Each vacancy in a position appointed from lists  
34 provided by the associations under subsection (2) of this section  
35 shall be filled from a list of at least three persons nominated by  
36 the relevant association or associations. Any members of the board,  
37 appointive or otherwise, may be removed by the governor for cause in  
38 accordance with RCW 43.06.070 and 43.06.080.

1       **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.155.060 and 1988 c 93 s 2 are each amended to  
2 read as follows:

3       (1) In order to aid the financing of public works projects, the  
4 board may:

5       ~~((1))~~ (a) Make ~~((low-interest or interest-free))~~ loans to local  
6 governments from the public works assistance account or other funds  
7 and accounts for the purpose of assisting local governments in  
8 financing public works projects. ~~((The board may require such terms  
9 and conditions and may charge such rates of interest on its loans as  
10 it deems necessary or convenient to carry out the purposes of this  
11 chapter.))~~ Money received from local governments in repayment of  
12 loans made under this section shall be paid into the public works  
13 assistance account for uses consistent with this chapter.

14       ~~((2))~~ (b) Pledge money in the public works assistance account,  
15 or money to be received by the public works assistance account, to  
16 the repayment of all or a portion of the principal of or interest on  
17 obligations issued by local governments to finance public works  
18 projects. The board shall not pledge any amount greater than the sum  
19 of money in the public works assistance account plus money to be  
20 received from the payment of the debt service on loans made from that  
21 account, nor shall the board pledge the faith and credit or the  
22 taxing power of the state or any agency or subdivision thereof to the  
23 repayment of obligations issued by any local government.

24       ~~((3))~~ (c) Create such subaccounts in the public works  
25 assistance account as the board deems necessary to carry out the  
26 purposes of this chapter.

27       ~~((4))~~ (d) Provide a method for the allocation of loans and  
28 financing guarantees and the provision of technical assistance under  
29 this chapter.

30       (2) When establishing interest rates for loan programs authorized  
31 in this chapter, the board must base interest rates on the average  
32 daily market interest rate for tax-exempt municipal bonds as  
33 published in the bond buyer's index for the period from sixty to  
34 thirty days before the start of the application cycle. For projects  
35 with a repayment period between five and twenty years, the rate must  
36 be sixty percent of the market rate. For projects with a repayment  
37 period under five years, the rate must be thirty percent of the  
38 market rate. The board must also provide reduced interest rates,  
39 extended repayment periods, or forgivable principal loans for  
40 projects that meet financial hardship criteria as measured by the

1 affordability index or similar standard measure of financial  
2 hardship.

3 (3) All local public works projects aided in whole or in part  
4 under the provisions of this chapter shall be put out for competitive  
5 bids, except for emergency public works under RCW 43.155.065 for  
6 which the recipient jurisdiction shall comply with this requirement  
7 to the extent feasible and practicable. The competitive bids called  
8 for shall be administered in the same manner as all other public  
9 works projects put out for competitive bidding by the local  
10 governmental entity aided under this chapter.

11 **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.155.065 and 2001 c 131 s 3 are each amended to  
12 read as follows:

13 The board may make (~~low-interest or interest-free~~) loans to  
14 local governments for emergency public works projects. Emergency  
15 public works projects shall include the construction, repair,  
16 reconstruction, replacement, rehabilitation, or improvement of a  
17 public water system that is in violation of health and safety  
18 standards and is being operated by a local government on a temporary  
19 basis. The loans may be used to help fund all or part of an emergency  
20 public works project less any reimbursement from any of the following  
21 sources: (1) Federal disaster or emergency funds, including funds  
22 from the federal emergency management agency; (2) state disaster or  
23 emergency funds; (3) insurance settlements; or (4) litigation.

24 **Sec. 4.** RCW 43.155.068 and 2001 c 131 s 4 are each amended to  
25 read as follows:

26 (1) The board may make (~~low-interest or interest-free~~) loans to  
27 local governments for preconstruction activities on public works  
28 projects before the legislature approves the construction phase of  
29 the project. Preconstruction activities include design, engineering,  
30 bid-document preparation, environmental studies, right-of-way  
31 acquisition, and other preliminary phases of public works projects as  
32 determined by the board. The purpose of the loans authorized in this  
33 section is to accelerate the completion of public works projects by  
34 allowing preconstruction activities to be performed before the  
35 approval of the construction phase of the project by the legislature.

36 (2) Projects receiving loans for preconstruction activities under  
37 this section must be evaluated using the (~~priority~~) process and  
38 factors in RCW 43.155.070(~~(+2)~~) (4). The receipt of a loan for

1 preconstruction activities does not ensure the receipt of a  
2 construction loan for the project under this chapter. Construction  
3 loans for projects receiving a loan for preconstruction activities  
4 under this section are subject to legislative approval under RCW  
5 43.155.070 (~~((4) and (5))~~) (6). The board shall adopt a single  
6 application process for local governments seeking both a loan for  
7 preconstruction activities under this section and a construction loan  
8 for the project.

9 **Sec. 5.** RCW 43.155.070 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 3 s 7033 are each  
10 amended to read as follows:

11 (1) To qualify for financial assistance under this chapter the  
12 board must determine that a local government meets all of the  
13 following conditions:

14 (a) The city or county must be imposing a tax under chapter 82.46  
15 RCW at a rate of at least one-quarter of one percent;

16 (b) The local government must have developed a capital facility  
17 plan; and

18 (c) The local government must be using all local revenue sources  
19 which are reasonably available for funding public works, taking into  
20 consideration local employment and economic factors.

21 (2) Except where necessary to address a public health need or  
22 substantial environmental degradation, a county, city, or town  
23 planning under RCW 36.70A.040 may not receive financial assistance  
24 under this chapter unless it has adopted a comprehensive plan,  
25 including a capital facilities plan element, and development  
26 regulations as required by RCW 36.70A.040. This subsection does not  
27 require any county, city, or town planning under RCW 36.70A.040 to  
28 adopt a comprehensive plan or development regulations before  
29 requesting or receiving financial assistance under this chapter if  
30 such request is made before the expiration of the time periods  
31 specified in RCW 36.70A.040. A county, city, or town planning under  
32 RCW 36.70A.040 that has not adopted a comprehensive plan and  
33 development regulations within the time periods specified in RCW  
34 36.70A.040 may apply for and receive financial assistance under this  
35 chapter if the comprehensive plan and development regulations are  
36 adopted as required by RCW 36.70A.040 before executing a contractual  
37 agreement for financial assistance with the board.

38 (3) In considering awarding financial assistance for public  
39 facilities to special districts requesting funding for a proposed

1 facility located in a county, city, or town planning under RCW  
2 36.70A.040, the board must consider whether the county, city, or town  
3 planning under RCW 36.70A.040 in whose planning jurisdiction the  
4 proposed facility is located has adopted a comprehensive plan and  
5 development regulations as required by RCW 36.70A.040.

6 ~~(4) ((The board must develop a priority process for public works  
7 projects as provided in this section. The intent of the priority  
8 process is to maximize the value of public works projects  
9 accomplished with assistance under this chapter. The board must  
10 attempt to assure a geographical balance in assigning priorities to  
11 projects. The board must consider at least the following factors in  
12 assigning a priority to a project:~~

13 ~~(a) Whether the local government receiving assistance has  
14 experienced severe fiscal distress resulting from natural disaster or  
15 emergency public works needs;~~

16 ~~(b) Except as otherwise conditioned by RCW 43.155.110, whether  
17 the entity receiving assistance is a Puget Sound partner, as defined  
18 in RCW 90.71.010;~~

19 ~~(c) Whether the project is referenced in the action agenda  
20 developed by the Puget Sound partnership under RCW 90.71.310;~~

21 ~~(d) Whether the project is critical in nature and would affect  
22 the health and safety of a great number of citizens;~~

23 ~~(e) Whether the applicant's permitting process has been certified  
24 as streamlined by the office of regulatory assistance;~~

25 ~~(f) Whether the applicant has developed and adhered to guidelines  
26 regarding its permitting process for those applying for development  
27 permits consistent with section 1(2), chapter 231, Laws of 2007;~~

28 ~~(g) The cost of the project compared to the size of the local  
29 government and amount of loan money available;~~

30 ~~(h) The number of communities served by or funding the project;~~

31 ~~(i) Whether the project is located in an area of high  
32 unemployment, compared to the average state unemployment;~~

33 ~~(j) Whether the project is the acquisition, expansion,  
34 improvement, or renovation by a local government of a public water  
35 system that is in violation of health and safety standards, including  
36 the cost of extending existing service to such a system;~~

37 ~~(k) Except as otherwise conditioned by RCW 43.155.120, and  
38 effective one calendar year following the development of model  
39 evergreen community management plans and ordinances under RCW  
40 35.105.050, whether the entity receiving assistance has been~~

1 ~~recognized, and what gradation of recognition was received, in the~~  
2 ~~evergreen community recognition program created in RCW 35.105.030;~~

3 ~~(1) The relative benefit of the project to the community,~~  
4 ~~considering the present level of economic activity in the community~~  
5 ~~and the existing local capacity to increase local economic activity~~  
6 ~~in communities that have low economic growth; and~~

7 ~~(m) Other criteria that the board considers advisable.~~

8 ~~(5) For the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium, in place of the criteria,~~  
9 ~~ranking, and submission processes for construction loan lists~~  
10 ~~provided in subsections (4) and (7) of this section:)~~

11 (a) The board must develop a process for numerically ranking  
12 applications for construction loans submitted by local governments.  
13 The board must consider, at a minimum and in any order, the following  
14 factors in assigning a numerical ranking to a project:

15 (i) Whether the project is critical in nature and would affect  
16 the health and safety of many people;

17 (ii) The extent to which the project leverages nonstate funds;

18 (iii) The extent to which the project is ready to proceed to  
19 construction;

20 (iv) Whether the project is located in an area of high  
21 unemployment, compared to the average state unemployment;

22 (v) Whether the project promotes the sustainable use of resources  
23 and environmental quality;

24 (vi) Whether the project consolidates or regionalizes systems;

25 (vii) Whether the project encourages economic development through  
26 mixed-use and mixed income development consistent with chapter 36.70A  
27 RCW;

28 (viii) Whether the system is being well-managed in the present  
29 and for long-term sustainability;

30 (ix) Achieving equitable distribution of funds by geography and  
31 population;

32 (x) The extent to which the project meets the following state  
33 policy objectives:

34 (A) Efficient use of state resources;

35 (B) Preservation and enhancement of health and safety;

36 (C) Abatement of pollution and protection of the environment;

37 (D) Creation of new, family-wage jobs, and avoidance of shifting  
38 existing jobs from one Washington state community to another;

39 (E) Fostering economic development consistent with chapter 36.70A  
40 RCW;

1 (F) Efficiency in delivery of goods and services, public transit,  
2 and transportation;

3 (G) Avoidance of additional costs to state and local governments  
4 that adversely impact local residents and small businesses; and

5 (H) Reduction of the overall cost of public infrastructure; and

6 (xi) Other criteria that the board considers necessary to achieve  
7 the purposes of this chapter.

8 (b) Before November (~~(1, 2016)~~) 1st of each year, the board must  
9 develop and submit to the appropriate fiscal committees of the senate  
10 and house of representatives a numerically ranked list of qualified  
11 public works projects which have been evaluated by the board and are  
12 recommended for funding by the legislature. The maximum amount of  
13 funding that the board may recommend for any jurisdiction is ten  
14 million dollars per biennium. For each project on the numerically  
15 ranked list, as well as for eligible projects not recommended for  
16 funding, the board must document the numerical ranking that was  
17 assigned.

18 (~~((6))~~) (5) Existing debt or financial obligations of local  
19 governments may not be refinanced under this chapter. Each local  
20 government applicant must provide documentation of attempts to secure  
21 additional local or other sources of funding for each public works  
22 project for which financial assistance is sought under this chapter.

23 (~~((7) Before November 1st of each even-numbered year, the board~~  
24 ~~must develop and submit to the appropriate fiscal committees of the~~  
25 ~~senate and house of representatives a description of the loans made~~  
26 ~~under RCW 43.155.065, 43.155.068, and subsection (10) of this section~~  
27 ~~during the preceding fiscal year and a prioritized list of projects~~  
28 ~~which are recommended for funding by the legislature, including one~~  
29 ~~copy to the staff of each of the committees. The list must include,~~  
30 ~~but not be limited to, a description of each project and recommended~~  
31 ~~financing, the terms and conditions of the loan or financial~~  
32 ~~guarantee, the local government jurisdiction and unemployment rate,~~  
33 ~~demonstration of the jurisdiction's critical need for the project and~~  
34 ~~documentation of local funds being used to finance the public works~~  
35 ~~project. The list must also include measures of fiscal capacity for~~  
36 ~~each jurisdiction recommended for financial assistance, compared to~~  
37 ~~authorized limits and state averages, including local government~~  
38 ~~sales taxes; real estate excise taxes; property taxes; and charges~~  
39 ~~for or taxes on sewerage, water, garbage, and other utilities.~~



1       ~~(8))~~ (6) The board may not sign contracts or otherwise  
2 financially obligate funds from the public works assistance account  
3 before the legislature has appropriated funds for a specific list of  
4 public works projects. The legislature may remove projects from the  
5 list recommended by the board. The legislature may not change the  
6 order of the priorities recommended for funding by the board.

7       ~~((9))~~ (7) Subsection ~~((8))~~ (6) of this section does not apply  
8 to loans made under RCW 43.155.065, 43.155.068, and subsection  
9 ~~((10))~~ (8) of this section.

10       ~~((10))~~ (8) Loans made for the purpose of capital facilities  
11 plans are exempted from subsection ~~((8))~~ (6) of this section.

12       ~~((11))~~ (9) To qualify for loans or pledges for solid waste or  
13 recycling facilities under this chapter, a city or county must  
14 demonstrate that the solid waste or recycling facility is consistent  
15 with and necessary to implement the comprehensive solid waste  
16 management plan adopted by the city or county under chapter 70.95  
17 RCW.

18       ~~((12))~~ (10) After January 1, 2010, any project designed to  
19 address the effects of storm water or wastewater on Puget Sound may  
20 be funded under this section only if the project is not in conflict  
21 with the action agenda developed by the Puget Sound partnership under  
22 RCW 90.71.310.

23       ~~((13) During the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium,))~~ (11) For projects  
24 involving repair, replacement, or improvement of a wastewater  
25 treatment plant or other public works facility for which an  
26 investment grade efficiency audit is obtainable, the public works  
27 board must require as a contract condition that the project sponsor  
28 undertake an investment grade efficiency audit. The project sponsor  
29 may finance the costs of the audit as part of its public works  
30 assistance account program loan.

31       ~~((14)(a) For public works assistance account application rounds  
32 conducted during the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium,))~~ (12) The board must  
33 implement policies and procedures designed to maximize local  
34 government use of federal funds to finance local infrastructure  
35 including, but not limited to, drinking water and clean water state  
36 revolving funds operated by the state departments of health and  
37 ecology. Projects that are eligible for the drinking water and clean  
38 water state revolving funds may receive public works board  
39 preconstruction loans. Projects that are eligible for the drinking  
40 water and clean water state revolving funds are not eligible for

1 public works board construction loans. For purposes of this  
2 subsection "eligible for drinking water and clean water state  
3 revolving funds" means:

4 ~~((i))~~ (a) Projects that have applied to the state revolving  
5 funds and are awaiting a funding decision;

6 ~~((ii))~~ (b) Projects that have been rejected for funding solely  
7 due to not meeting readiness requirements; and

8 ~~((iii))~~ (c) Projects that have not applied, but would likely be  
9 eligible if the project applied and met the project readiness  
10 requirements.

11 ~~((b) For all construction loan projects proposed to the  
12 legislature for funding during the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium, the  
13 board must base interest rates on the average daily market interest  
14 rate for tax-exempt municipal bonds as published in the bond buyer's  
15 index for the period from sixty to thirty days before the start of  
16 the application cycle. For projects with a repayment period between  
17 five and twenty years, the rate must be sixty percent of the market  
18 rate. For projects with a repayment period under five years, the rate  
19 must be thirty percent of the market rate. The board must also  
20 provide reduced interest rates, extended repayment periods, or  
21 forgivable principal loans for projects that meet financial hardship  
22 criteria as measured by the affordability index or similar standard  
23 measure of financial hardship.))~~

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 43.155  
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 Every four years, the board shall, in collaboration with other  
27 federal and state organizations, advocate groups, and other  
28 stakeholders associated with infrastructure, provide the governor and  
29 the appropriate committees of the legislature with a comprehensive  
30 assessment of local infrastructure needs and potential resources  
31 within the state to meet those needs.

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