

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5524

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As of February 8, 2017

**Title:** An act relating to diking improvement districts in Snohomish county.

**Brief Description:** Removing diking districts in Snohomish county from county surface water management fees.

**Sponsors:** Senators Hobbs and Honeyford.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Local Government: 2/02/17.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Exempts property in diking improvement districts within Snohomish County from Snohomish County Surface Water Management fees.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Staff:** Alex Fairfortune (786-7416)

**Background:** Diking Improvement Districts (districts). Diking improvement districts are special purpose districts established to improve dikes, drains, and ditches to provide an efficient system of drainage for land within the district. Districts are governed by a board of three elected supervisors, and are authorized to impose assessments on properties within their borders in proportion to the benefits those properties receive from diking improvements and maintenance.

Snohomish County Surface Water Management. The Snohomish County Public Works Department provides surface water management services within Snohomish County. These services are funded through a variety of revenue sources, including the Surface Water Management fee. The Surface Water Management Fee is set by ordinance adopted by the Snohomish County Council, and is collected with annual property taxes.

In Snohomish County, real property within diking districts must be given a credit equal to the dollar value of the district's annual assessment, to be applied to the annual service charge for storm water facilities. This credit may not exceed the annual service charge.

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*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:** Property in diking improvement districts within Snohomish County are exempt from Snohomish County Surface Water Management fees.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: Snohomish County Surface Water Management needed to expand its taxing authority to get more money. This expansion led to the diking district being included. The diking district does a better job at a lower cost, and everything is funded and managed independently. One diking improvement assessment was \$1,028 and the surface water management fee was \$1,057. This is double taxation.

CON: This is the first the county has heard of these concerns, and the constituents will be connected with those at the county to address this locally. The purpose of the fee is to allow the county to meet state and federal requirements. There is a credit mechanism in place for diking districts. The surface water management utility provides different services from the diking districts.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Steve Hobbs, Prime Sponsor; Steve Arbaugh, landowner; Ronald Brown, landowner.

CON: Briahna Murray, Snohomish County.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.