

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 5295

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Local Government

**Title:** An act relating to leases of irrigation district property.

**Brief Description:** Regarding leases of irrigation district property.

**Sponsors:** Senators Delvin, Swecker, Schoesler, Holmquist Newbry, Honeyford and Hewitt.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Local Government: 3/8/11 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Allows the board of directors of an irrigation district to determine the lease duration for leases of district-owned land.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Takko, Chair; Tharinger, Vice Chair; Angel, Ranking Minority Member; Asay, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Smith, Springer and Upthegrove.

**Staff:** Miranda Leskinen (786-7291) and Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

**Background:**

Irrigation districts provide construction, improvement, maintenance, and operation of irrigation systems. Irrigation districts may also provide drainage, domestic water supply, and electric power facilities. A board of three, five, or seven elected directors manages each irrigation district.

An irrigation district may sell or lease its real property subject to meeting three criteria:

1. the irrigation district board of directors (board) determines that the district does not need the property;
2. the board authorizes the property sale or lease; and

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3. the public is given notice of the proposed sale or lease.

If these requirements are met, the district may exercise one of five options. It may:

1. lease the property from year to year;
2. give the lessee the option to purchase the property;
3. sell the property on contract for deferred payments;
4. sell the property pursuant to a promissory note secured by a mortgage or deed of trust; or
5. sell the property for cash and conveyance by deed.

The board must make a record of the real property sale price, lease price, or agreement to sell price. This price must meet the fair market value of the property unless the property is donated for highway or public utility purposes that will enhance the value of the district's remaining property more so than the value of the donated land.

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**Summary of Bill:**

An irrigation district may lease real property it owns for a duration determined by its board. The requirement for a year-to-year lease is deleted.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This provides the boards with flexibility in determining the lease duration for district-owned land, which allows investments to be made that are good for economic development.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Delvin, prime sponsor; and Mike Schwisow, Washington State Water Resources Association.

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