

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

SB 5620

Title: Aquifer protection areas.

Brief Description: Provides for creation of an elected board of commissioners for an aquifer protection area and issuance of bonds.

Sponsors: Senators Haugen and McCaslin

Hearing Date: March 26, 1997

Background: An aquifer protection area is a funding mechanism by which a county may fund the protection, preservation, and rehabilitation of subterranean water.

A county legislative authority may create an aquifer protection area by submitting a ballot proposition to the voters residing in the proposed area. An aquifer protection area is created if the voters approve the proposition by simple majority.

Aquifer protection areas may impose fees on the withdrawal of subterranean water and on-site sewage disposal. The amount of and use of the fees must be approved by majority vote of the voters in the aquifer protection area.

Summary: A county legislative authority may create a board of commissioners to govern an existing aquifer protection area. For newly created aquifer protection areas, commissioners shall be elected at the same election as the proposition is presented as to whether an aquifer protection area should be created.

Commissioners of aquifer protection areas may incur general indebtedness payable from annual tax levies for the purpose of constructing improvements described in a comprehensive plan to protect, preserve, and rehabilitate subterranean water. The indebtedness must be approved by three-fifths of the voters voting on the proposition, at an election at which the total number of persons voting on the proposition constitutes at least 40 percent of the votes cast at the last general election.

Fiscal Note: Requested.