

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6262

As of January 26, 2000

Title: An act relating to notice of tariff changes by water companies.

Brief Description: Requiring sixty days' notice for water company tariff changes.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, Morton and Brown.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Energy, Technology & Telecommunications: 1/27/2000.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Staff: William Bridges (786-7424)

Background: The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission regulates about 72 water companies in the state. These companies are investor-owned, having at least 100 customers or having customers with average water bills over \$429 a year.

When a regulated water company seeks a rate increase, it must give 30 days notice to the commission and affected customers. During this period, the commission initiates an investigation. But by the end of 30 days, the commission must act by approving the rate increase at an open meeting, suspending the rate increase pending further investigation, or setting the matter for a formal hearing.

Concerns have been raised that affected customers do not have enough time under the 30-day period to present evidence and arguments in opposition to a rate increase.

Summary of Bill: Companies seeking commission approval of a rate increase must provide 60 days notice to the commission and individual ratepayers.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2000.