

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6349

As Passed Senate, February 7, 2000

Title: An act relating to extending the expiration date of the water well delegation program.

Brief Description: Extending the expiration date of the water well delegation program.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Environmental Quality & Water Resources (originally sponsored by Senators Eide, Morton, Swecker, Prentice, Fraser, McAuliffe and Rasmussen).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environmental Quality & Water Resources: 1/18/2000; 1/21/2000 [DPS].

Passed Senate, 2/7/2000, 48-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & WATER RESOURCES

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6349 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Fraser, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Honeyford, Jacobsen, McAuliffe, Morton and Swecker.

Staff: Genevieve Pisarski (786-7488)

Background: Under existing law, the Department of Ecology may delegate some of its authority to regulate water well construction and decommissioning to local health districts or counties who request the delegation and have the capability to exercise the authority. The existing law was first enacted in 1992 and amended in 1993 and 1996. Delegation is accomplished through a memorandum of agreement and is limited to administration of well identification, sealing, and decommissioning requirements. Fees are shared.

Summary of Bill: The expiration date of the water well delegation program is extended from June 30, 2000 to June 30, 2006.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Delegation improves the efficiency and efficacy of the program. Local health officials can include wells in the course of other routine field inspections and get more of them done, and they have experience in environmental health in addition to specific training. This is very important because of the risks that lack of well identification and improper sealing and decommissioning pose to public health and groundwater resources.

Because of changes in technology, it is good to revisit the delegation program periodically, but it could be permanent.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Art Starry, Washington State Environmental Health Directors, Thurston County Environmental Authority; Paul Parker, Washington State Association of Counties; Ken Slattery, Dick Szymarck, Department of Ecology; Mike Matson, Washington Drilling & Ground Water Association.