
HOUSE BILL 1778

State of Washington

56th Legislature

1999 Regular Session

By Representatives Regala, Anderson, Buck, Doumit, G. Chandler, Poulsen, Cooper, McMorris, Parlette, Tokuda, McDonald, Mastin, Linville, Stensen, Lantz, Lovick, Ogden, Veloria, Rockefeller, Kagi, Edwards, Kenney, McIntire, Keiser, Murray, Quall, Fisher, Cody, Romero, Conway, Santos, Haigh, Constantine and Kessler

Read first time 02/05/1999. Referred to Committee on Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to providing grants for urban and community
2 forestry projects; amending RCW 76.15.005, 76.15.007, and 76.15.020;
3 adding new sections to chapter 76.15 RCW; and making appropriations.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 76.15.005 and 1991 c 179 s 1 are each amended to read
6 as follows:

7 The legislature finds and declares that:

8 (1) The evergreen state has suffered a significant loss of tree
9 cover and vegetation in urban and suburban communities over the last
10 twenty years, and the impact of this tree loss has been costly.
11 Reports indicate that the high tree canopy coverage from Olympia to
12 Everett has declined by thirty-seven percent since 1972. The loss of
13 the tree cover has resulted in significant expenditures for man-made
14 infrastructures to deal with storm water runoff, air pollution, and
15 energy needs.

16 (2) Trees and other woody vegetation are a necessary and important
17 part of community and urban environments. Community and urban forests
18 have many values and uses including conserving energy, reducing air and
19 water pollution and soil erosion, contributing to property values,

1 attracting business, reducing glare and noise, providing aesthetic and
2 historical values, providing wood products, providing habitat critical
3 to the preservation of endangered and threatened species including
4 salmon, and affording comfort and protection for humans and wildlife.

5 ~~((+2))~~ (3) As urban and community areas in Washington state grow,
6 the need to plan for and protect community and urban forests increases.
7 Cities and communities benefit from assistance in developing and
8 maintaining community and urban forestry programs that also address
9 future growth.

10 ~~((+3))~~ (4) Assistance and encouragement in establishment,
11 retention, and enhancement of these forests and trees by local
12 governments, citizens, organizations, and professionals are in the
13 interest of the state based on the contributions these forests make in
14 preserving and enhancing the quality of life of Washington's
15 municipalities and counties while providing opportunities for economic
16 development.

17 (5) Trees help protect and enhance residential and business
18 property values. Studies have shown that trees are good for business
19 because consumers prefer to shop in business districts with healthy
20 urban forest landscaping.

21 **Sec. 2.** RCW 76.15.007 and 1991 c 179 s 2 are each amended to read
22 as follows:

23 The purpose of this chapter is to:

24 (1) Encourage planting and maintenance and management of trees in
25 the state's municipalities and counties and maximize the potential of
26 tree and vegetative cover in improving the quality of the environment.

27 (2) Encourage the coordination of state and local agency activities
28 and maximize citizen participation in the development and
29 implementation of community and urban forestry-related programs.

30 (3) Foster healthy economic activity for the state's community and
31 urban forestry-related businesses through cooperative and supportive
32 contracts with the private business sector.

33 (4) Facilitate the creation of employment opportunities related to
34 community and urban forestry activities including opportunities for
35 inner city youth to learn teamwork, resource conservation,
36 environmental appreciation, and job skills.

1 (5) Provide meaningful voluntary opportunities for the state's
2 citizens and organizations interested in community and urban forestry
3 activities.

4 (6) Provide funding for local governmental and nongovernmental
5 organizations for the facilitation of urban and community forestry
6 programs through the grant program established in section 5 of this
7 act.

8 **Sec. 3.** RCW 76.15.020 and 1991 c 179 s 4 are each amended to read
9 as follows:

10 (1) The department (~~may~~) shall, subject to available funding,
11 establish and maintain a program in community and urban forestry to
12 accomplish the purpose stated in RCW 76.15.007. The department (~~may~~)
13 shall, subject to available funding, assist municipalities and counties
14 in establishing and maintaining community and urban forestry programs
15 and encourage persons to engage in appropriate and improved tree
16 management and care.

17 (2) The department (~~may~~) shall, subject to available funding,
18 advise, encourage, and assist municipalities, counties, and other
19 public and private entities in the development and coordination of
20 policies, programs, and activities for the promotion of community and
21 urban forestry.

22 (3) The department (~~may~~) shall, subject to available funding,
23 appoint a committee or council to advise the department in establishing
24 and carrying out a program in community and urban forestry. For the
25 purpose of building partnerships throughout the state, the committee or
26 council may take any actions necessary to qualify as a nonprofit
27 corporation under the United States internal revenue service code.

28 (4) The department may assist municipal and county tree maintenance
29 programs by making surplus equipment available on loan where feasible
30 for community and urban forestry programs and cooperative projects.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 76.15 RCW
32 to read as follows:

33 The committee or council shall have the following duties:

34 (1) To perform any task necessary to secure for this state the
35 benefits of federal urban forestry programs;

36 (2) To review and make decisions on applications for grant moneys
37 according to the criteria established in section 5 of this act;

1 (3) To advise and make recommendations to the commissioner of
2 public lands regarding urban and community forestry issues;

3 (4) To provide public education and advocacy for community and
4 urban forestry issues;

5 (5) To provide leadership and direction to state-wide urban
6 forestry efforts;

7 (6) To develop and maintain a clearinghouse of information related
8 to urban and community forestry issues; and

9 (7) To advise the legislature and the residents of the state on the
10 best ways to preserve, protect, and improve the urban and community
11 forests of Washington.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 76.15 RCW
13 to read as follows:

14 (1) The department of natural resources shall, subject to available
15 funding, provide grants to local urban and community forestry projects.
16 To receive a grant, a project must be proposed and managed by
17 municipal, county, or state governments, or by legally organized
18 nonprofit organizations, and meet the criteria established in
19 subsection (2) of this section.

20 (2) The department shall distribute grant moneys to projects that:

21 (a) Encourage community and urban forests through the establishment
22 and maintenance of trees;

23 (b) Assist in implementing regional and local land use planning
24 projects related to urban forestry;

25 (c) Prepare urban tree plans;

26 (d) Retain native trees and riparian habitats; and

27 (e) Address any other matter related to the purposes of this act as
28 stated in RCW 76.15.007.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** (1) The sum of one hundred thousand dollars,
30 or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal

1 year ending June 30, 2000, from the general fund to the department of
2 natural resources for the purposes of section 5 of this act.

3 (2) The sum of one hundred thousand dollars, or as much thereof as
4 may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June 30,
5 2001, from the general fund to the department of natural resources for
6 the purposes of section 5 of this act.

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