

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6755

As of February 6, 2002

Title: An act relating to the relinquishment of water rights approved for instream beneficial uses.

Brief Description: Preventing relinquishment of water rights authorized for instream beneficial uses of water.

Sponsors: Senators Fraser, Morton and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Environment, Energy & Water: 2/7/02.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & WATER

Staff: Genevieve Pisarski (786-7488)

Background: State water law designates as beneficial uses a number of instream uses of water, such as fish and wildlife needs, recreation, and preservation of environmental and aesthetic values. State law specifically exempts from relinquishment water rights that are held for such instream uses by the state trust water rights program. It does not specifically exempt water rights that are held for such instream uses by any other party. Lack of a specific exemption from relinquishment is significant, in light of the fact that traditional methods of showing that water is put to beneficial use cannot be used for such instream uses.

Summary of Bill: A water right authorized for any instream beneficial use of water is not subject to relinquishment.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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