

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5987

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Governmental Operations, January 30, 2014

Title: An act relating to providing an additional method for water-sewer districts to disburse funds.

Brief Description: Providing an additional method for water-sewer districts to disburse funds.

Sponsors: Senators Hatfield and Roach.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Governmental Operations: 1/20/14, 1/30/14 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Hasegawa, Ranking Member; Conway, Dansel, McCoy and Rivers.

Staff: Karen Epps (786-7424)

Background: Water-sewer districts (districts) provide water and sewer services to incorporated and unincorporated areas. Districts are established through a petition, public hearing, and voter approval process and are each managed by a board of three or five elected commissioners (board) who serve staggered six-year terms. District powers include the authority to purchase, construct, maintain, and supply waterworks to furnish water to inhabitants within and outside of the district, and to develop and operate systems of sewers and drainage. In addition, a district has the authority to create facilities, systems, and programs for the collection, interception, treatment, and disposal of wastewater, and for the control of pollution from the wastewater.

Generally, the county treasurer acts as the treasurer of a district located within the county. Based on information submitted by the district, the county auditor issues warrants and sends them to the county treasurer for payment. Districts with 2500 or more customers may appoint their own treasurer, if authorized by the county treasurer. An appointed treasurer possesses the powers of the county treasurer and county auditor for the district concerning the creation of funds, issuing warrants, and investing district monies.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill: Districts that have maintained an annual operating budget of over \$5 million for each of the last three years may adopt a policy by resolution to issue their own warrants for payments of claims or other obligations of the district. Districts that have maintained an annual operating budget between \$250,000 and \$5 million for each of the last three years are authorized, upon agreement with the county treasurer, to adopt a policy to issue their own warrants for payments of claims or other obligations of the district. The board, after auditing all payrolls and bills, issues one general certificate to the county treasurer, authorizing the county treasurer to pay all the warrants specified and the fund from which payment will be made. The district may then issue warrants specified in the general warrant.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill provides water-sewer districts with an alternative way to issue their own warrants. This legislation is patterned after a process that is used by fire protection districts. This process would be optional for water-sewer districts. There have been issues in counties where checks only go out once per month.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Joe Daniels, WA Assn. of Sewer Water Districts.