

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6125

As of May 23, 2015

Title: An act relating to emergency drought response.

Brief Description: Concerning emergency drought response.

Sponsors: Senators Honeyford, Keiser and Warnick.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Ways & Means: 5/26/15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Brian Sims (786-7431)

Background: The Department of Ecology (DOE) is authorized to take various actions and provided support to state agencies and local government entities to mitigate the effects of a drought. Drought conditions exist when the water supply for a geographical area or for a significant portion of a geographical area is below 75 percent of normal and the water shortage is likely to create undue hardships for various water users and uses.

On May 15, 2015, the Governor expanded his declaration of drought conditions to a statewide drought.

Funding for drought response is through the State Drought Preparedness Account (SDPA). The account does not have a regular source of revenue.

Summary of Bill: Fourteen million dollars of the general fund is appropriated to the SDPA in Fiscal Year 2015. Those funds are appropriated from the SDPA, along with \$4 million in bonds, to the DOE for emergency drought response. This appropriation is a supplemental increase in the capital budget for 2013-15 biennium. This will allow the DOE to begin emergency drought response immediately. The appropriations are reappropriated for the 2015-17 biennium.

If drought conditions are not declared for 2016, any unobligated amounts in the SDPA must be transferred to the Disaster Preparedness Account.

Appropriation: \$18 million.

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.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.