

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 6028

AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 10, 1992

Brief Description: Authorizing cities and towns to issue revenue bonds for financing water conservation programs.

SPONSORS: Senators Barr, Madsen, Williams and Erwin; by request of Jnt Sel Com on Water Resource Policy

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & WATER RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Barr, Chairman; Bailey, Gaspard, and Newhouse.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Hearing Dates: January 16, 1992; January 21, 1992

BACKGROUND:

In 1989, voters approved a constitutional amendment that provides authority to various municipal entities that supply water to use public funds for water conservation improvements in privately owned structures.

Legislation contingent on the approval of the constitutional amendment also passed establishing specific parameters for the water conservation program for municipal corporations engaged in the sale or distribution of power. However, a specific grant of authority for cities to use bonded indebtedness to finance water conservation projects was not included.

SUMMARY:

Existing authority for cities to use bonded indebtedness to finance electrical energy conservation programs is expanded to include water conservation programs.

Authority is provided for counties to engage in water conservation programs for structures provided water service by the county. Also, counties are provided authority to issue revenue bonds and other forms of indebtedness to finance water conservation projects.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Bond counsel has advised cities that specific legislation is needed to authorize the use of revenue bonds for financing water conservation programs.

There are some counties that provide water service to people within their county. The 1989 constitutional amendment allows counties to provide loans or grants to owners of structures for water conservation improvements. However, the 1989 legislation did not include authority for counties to engage in water conservation programs. If counties are to conduct water conservation programs within the areas they provide water service to, authority is needed to administer the program and to issue revenue bonds or other forms of indebtedness.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Paul Parker, Washington State Association of Counties (Pro); John Kirner, Tacoma Water (Pro); Henry Yates, Seattle City Light (Pro)