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SENATE BILL 5716

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State of Washington

52nd Legislature

1991 Regular Session

By Senators Barr, Madsen, Williams, Hansen, Newhouse and Bailey; by request of Jnt Sel Com on Water Resource Policy.

Read first time February 18, 1991. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Water Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to the joint select committee on water resource  
2 policy; and amending RCW 90.54.024.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 90.54.024 and 1988 c 47 s 3 are each amended to read  
5 as follows:

6 (1) The legislature finds that state-wide water resource policies  
7 are undergoing transition as state, local, and tribal governments and  
8 interested parties attempt to confront increasing demands for limited  
9 water resources. Water resource issues are complex and far-reaching;  
10 they require vision and foresight in addition to a solid foundation of  
11 knowledge to guide legislative decision making. It is in the best  
12 interests of the public that a joint committee of the legislature gain  
13 particular expertise in water resource issues and actively participate  
14 with local governments, Indian tribes, and interested parties in the  
15 development of recommendations for state water resource policy.

1       (2) There is hereby created a joint select committee on water  
2 resource policy to address ~~((the findings reached by the fact finding  
3 service pursuant to RCW 90.54.022))~~ the important water resource issues  
4 of this state, to monitor the implementation of comprehensive regional  
5 water resource planning and data management required by RCW 90.54.010,  
6 90.54.030, and 90.54.045, and to otherwise develop an expertise in  
7 water resource issues in order to advise the legislature regarding  
8 state water policy. The committee shall consist of twelve voting  
9 members appointed jointly by the speaker of the house of  
10 representatives and the president of the senate. The speaker of the  
11 house of representatives and the president of the senate may each  
12 appoint nonvoting members to participate in the meetings of the joint  
13 select committee. The voting membership shall be equally divided from  
14 each major political caucus and shall, to the extent possible,  
15 represent all major water interests, including but not limited to  
16 agriculture, fisheries, municipal, environmental, recreational, and  
17 hydroelectric.

18       ~~((+2))~~ (3) The staff support shall be provided by the senate  
19 committee services and the office of program research as mutually  
20 agreed by the cochairs of the joint select committee. The cochairs  
21 shall be designated by the speaker of the house of representatives and  
22 the president of the senate.

23       ~~((+3))~~ (4) In addition to responsibilities identified in  
24 ~~((subsection (6) of))~~ this section, the purpose of the joint select  
25 committee shall be to address and recommend in ~~((a))~~ written annual  
26 reports to the full legislature the fundamentals of water resource  
27 policy for the state of Washington. ~~((The joint select committee shall  
28 review and evaluate the report of the fact finding service and shall  
29 hold a minimum of four public hearings throughout the state.~~

1       ~~The committee shall recommend in its report the procedures for~~  
2 ~~allocating water resources of the state, considering the findings of~~  
3 ~~the fact-finding service and the present and future demands on the use~~  
4 ~~of water resources. The joint select committee shall further evaluate~~  
5 ~~the need to prioritize the use of the water resources of this state.~~

6       (4)) The joint select committee shall work with state, tribal, and  
7 local governments and interested parties to identify significant water  
8 resource issues and to develop recommendations to the legislature to  
9 address water resource needs.

10       (5) The joint select committee may include in its annual reports to  
11 the legislature recommendations for revisions to existing laws to set  
12 forth the water policies of the state and may also recommend revisions  
13 to existing law to give direction to the department of ecology and  
14 other agencies and officials in carrying out the fundamental water  
15 policies of the state as adopted by the legislature. In its 1991  
16 report to the legislature, the joint select committee shall provide  
17 information and recommendations regarding the regulatory role of the  
18 utilities and transportation commission, with particular emphasis on  
19 problems and recommended solutions associated with financial viability  
20 of small water systems.

21       (~~(5) The joint select committee shall submit its written report of~~  
22 ~~findings and recommendations to the 1989 legislature. A draft report~~  
23 ~~shall be completed by December 1, 1988, and distributed to interested~~  
24 ~~parties. The final report shall be distributed and a public hearing~~  
25 ~~shall be held no later than one week prior to the first day of the 1989~~  
26 ~~legislative session.~~

27       (6) ~~The joint select committee shall monitor the actions taken to~~  
28 ~~implement the recommendations made in the written report required in~~  
29 ~~subsection (5) of this section and the results of any legislation~~  
30 ~~enacted affecting the fundamental water resource policies of the state.~~

1 ~~At its discretion, the joint select committee may address issues~~  
2 ~~affecting the allocation, efficient use, conservation, or distribution~~  
3 ~~of surface and ground water to achieve the maximum benefits to the~~  
4 ~~state. The committee shall report periodically to the legislature.~~

5 ~~(7))~~ (6) This section shall expire June 30, ~~((1991))~~ 1993.