

FINAL BILL REPORT

2ESB 5251

C 111 L 16
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Transferring public water system financial assistance activities from the public works board and the department of commerce to the department of health.

Sponsors: Senators Honeyford and Keiser; by request of Department of Health.

Senate Committee on Agriculture, Water & Rural Economic Development

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

House Committee on General Government & Information Technology

House Committee on Capital Budget

Background: In 1995 the Legislature created a drinking water assistance account to allow the state to assist water systems in providing safe drinking water using funds available under federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The water system acquisition and rehabilitation program is administered by the Department of Commerce (Commerce) and the Public Works Board (PWB). Expenditures from the account may only be made after appropriation by the Department of Health (DOH), Commerce, or PWB.

As part of the program, DOH must:

- develop guidelines for providing public water assistance and related prioritization and oversight responsibilities;
- submit pre-application information to PWB for review and comment;
- submit a prioritized list of projects to PWB for determination of the applicant's ability to repay the loan and project readiness;
- determine consistency with existing water resource planning and management;
- determine least-cost solutions where consolidation and restructuring of systems is appropriate, regional benefits, and compliance with SDWA;
- implement water use efficiency and other demand management measures;
- assist planning and engineering to ensure professional review of projects;
- establish minimum standards for water system capacity; and
- coordinate with other state programs addressing water quality or drinking water contamination.

Summary: By December 31, 2016, DOH, Commerce, and PWB must develop memoranda of understanding transferring financial administration of the program to DOH. Until June 30, 2018, expenditures may be made by DOH, PWB, and Commerce. Beginning July 1, 2018, only DOH may expend money from the account.

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.

Technical changes are made:

- clarifies that the account assists local governments and public water systems;
- removes expired rulemaking and reporting provisions;
- removes examples of cost-effective and timely services;
- removes a provision requiring DOH to submit pre-application information to PWB;
- removes examples of criteria for financial assistance for public water systems;
- removes the requirement for approval by PWB; and
- adds a requirement for submitting a prioritized list to the Legislature each year.

Votes on Final Passage:

2015 Regular Session

Senate 48 1

2015 Third Session

Senate 43 2

2016 Regular Session

Senate 48 1

House 92 4

Effective: June 9, 2016