

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2988

As Reported by House Committee On: Capital Budget

Title: An act relating to distribution of state forestland revenues for certain former state forestlands.

Brief Description: Concerning the distribution of state forestland revenues for certain former state forestlands.

Sponsors: Representatives Tharinger and DeBolt.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Capital Budget: 2/19/18, 2/26/18 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Ensures trust beneficiaries of former state forestlands are not harmed by the inter-trust land exchange required in the 2017-19 Capital Budget appropriation for the Trust Land Transfer program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Tharinger, Chair; Doglio, Vice Chair; Peterson, Vice Chair; DeBolt, Ranking Minority Member; Smith, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dye, Eslick, Kraft, MacEwen, Macri, Morris, Reeves, Riccelli, Ryu, Sells, Steele, Stonier, Volz and Walsh.

Staff: Christine Thomas (786-7142).

Background:

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages more than 600,000 acres of state forestlands, which were acquired primarily through tax foreclosures in the 1920s and 1930s, and to a lesser extent through purchases by the state or gifts to the state. State forestlands are managed for the benefit of taxing districts that provide public services such as roads, schools, hospitals, libraries, and fire districts in the counties in which the lands are located. Revenues

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generated by state forestlands are distributed to the counties in the same manner as general taxes are paid and distributed to the various taxing districts.

The 2017-19 Omnibus Capital Budget contained a provision in the Trust Land Transfer appropriation that directed the DNR to exchange land within the Common School Trust for state forestlands of equal value known as the Harriet A. Spanel State Forest by June 30, 2018. The taxing districts of the former Common School Trust land may change as a result of the inter-trust land exchange.

Summary of Bill:

The county may pay, distribute, and prorate payments for the former Common School Trust land exchanged into the State Forestlands Trust in the same manner as general taxes are paid for the former state forestlands that were subject to the exchange.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The bill allows revenues to remain with the original beneficiaries and taxing districts.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative DeBolt, prime sponsor; Dave Warren, Department of Natural Resources; and Brian Adams, Skagit County Parks and Recreation.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.