Washington State
House of Representatives
Office of Program Research

BILL ANALYSIS

Environment & Energy Committee

HB 1302

Brief Description: Concerning utility connection charge waivers.

Sponsors: Representatives Cortes, Barnard, Simmons, Reed, Springer and Timmons.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes municipalities to adopt programs to waive utility connection charges for properties owned by organizations that utilize the property for industrial symbiosis.

Hearing Date: 1/27/25

Staff: Srinandan Ramachandran (786-7291) and Matt Sterling (786-7289).

Background:

Municipalities have the authority to:

- acquire, build, operate, and regulate utility systems to provide services like gas, electricity, and lighting;
- charge property owners a reasonable connection charge to cover their equitable share of the costs of constructing or rehabilitating a municipal water or sewer system; and
- create programs by ordinance to waive or delay utility connection charges for certain individuals, groups, or entities.

Municipal Utility Waiver Programs.
The individuals, groups, and entities eligible for waivers or delays of utility connection charges under a program created by a municipality includes:

- low-income individuals and groups;
- nonprofit organizations;

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- public development authorities;
- housing authorities; and local agencies that provide emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or affordable housing.

Connection charges are one-time fees charged by a utility to cover the cost of connecting a property to its service infrastructure, including expenses for labor, materials, and administrative processing. The waived connection charges must be funded through general funds, grants, or other designated revenue sources, and if the property no longer qualifies under the program's criteria, the waived charges must be repaid to continue utility service.

Summary of Bill:

Municipal Utility Waiver Programs.
Municipal utilities are authorized to create programs by ordinance to waive connection charges for properties owned or developed by organizations that utilize the property for industrial symbiosis.

Industrial symbiosis means the utilization of industrial waste or other waste products for productive use in an environmentally sustainable manner that reduces the amount of:
- resources that would otherwise have been consumed; and
- greenhouse gases that would otherwise have been emitted to accomplish the same purpose.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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