HOUSE BILL REPORT
EHB 1609

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to efficient administration of state education agencies.

Brief Description: Promoting efficient administration of state education agencies.

Sponsors: Representatives Waters, Mena, Reed and Nance; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Agriculture & Natural Resources: 2/14/25, 2/18/25 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/11/25, 78-17.
Passed Senate: 4/11/25, 49-0.
Passed Legislature.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Allows the Superintendent of Public Instruction to use a designee on the Board of Natural Resources.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Reeves, Chair; Morgan, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Engell, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bernbaum, McClintock, Nance, Richards and Springer.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Orcutt and Schmick.

Staff: Lily Smith (786-7175).

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background:

Board of Natural Resources.

The Board of Natural Resources (Board) sets policies to guide how the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages the state's lands and resources. The Board has several responsibilities: (1) approve or disapprove trust land timber and mineral sales; (2) establish the sustainable harvest level for forested trust lands; (3) approve or disapprove sales or exchanges of trust lands; and (4) guide the DNR's stewardship of state natural area preserves, natural resources conservation areas, and aquatic or submerged lands.

The Board is composed of six members:

- the Governor or a designee;
- the Superintendent of Public Instruction (Superintendent);
- the Commissioner of Public Lands;
- the director of the University of Washington School of Forest Resources;
- the dean of the Washington State University College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences; and
- a county representative.

Summary of Engrossed Bill:

The Superintendent may use a designee on the Board.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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) This is agency request legislation. There is a complicated dynamic between the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of Natural Resources, as there has been a decline in revenue for schools, and some people say that this revenue should not be what funds schools. It is important for the Superintendent to focus their time in education areas. This may seem like a small issue, but the Superintendent is dealing with many major issues right now, and while they respect the Board of Natural Resources, they would like additional flexibility for certain meetings, such as those without voting.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Kevin Waters, prime sponsor; and Tyler Muench,

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.