

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action:	Do Pass the A-Engrossed Measure
Vote:	5 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Atkinson, Boquist, Hass, Prozanski, Dingfelder
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Beth Herzog, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	5/12

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Updates and clarifies Soil and Water Conservation Districts' (district) authorizing statutes to reflect current practice and contemporary concerns. Requires State Department of Agriculture (ODA) to administer referendum process if 10 percent of electors within a proposed district file a written request. Stipulates that if a referendum is not required ODA must set forth name and boundaries of district. Requires ODA to appoint five member board if district is formed. Authorizes landowner to petition ODA to be included or withdrawn from existing district. Establishes process for ODA to respond to landowner's petition to be included or withdrawn from existing district. Addresses consolidation and merger of districts that occur when local property tax levies exist for local conservation purposes. Provides process for dissolution of districts.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Costly referendum process can be avoided unless there is controversy surrounding the district
- Provides clear process for merging a district with taxing authority to a district that does not

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: The authorizing statutes for soil and water conservation districts (districts) have not been updated for some time. As a result, the statutes do not reflect actual practice, modern conservation issues, or current economic conditions. House Bill 2082A eliminates authority no longer exercised by districts, streamlines their current relationship with the Oregon Department of Agriculture, and seeks to reduce costs by limiting public elections.