

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date:

Action:

Meeting Dates:

Vote:

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Adds levee inspection and repair projects to the qualified uses of monies in the Special Public Works Fund. Authorizes the Oregon Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA) in the Oregon Business Development Department to provide loans or grants for levee projects to drainage districts, corporations for drainage or flood control or for-profit or nonprofit entities and individuals in the ownership, construction, inspection, accreditation, certification or repair of levees. Specifies that when considering project eligibility, IFA must find that the levee project substantially contributes to improvement, expansion or repair of state's or municipality's infrastructure system and is essential for use of development of farms, industrial or commercial land in Oregon to approve project.

Authorizes the Water Resources Department to inspect, evaluate and assess condition of levees with the permission of levee's owner. Maintains legal liabilities of levee owners. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Condition of levees and potential uses of funds
- Fiscal impact of the measure
- Funding request for levee inspections in the Oregon Business Development Department budget request
- Certification of levees by the Water Resources Department

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Removes authorization for the Water Resources Department to certify levee compliance with federal safety and flood standards.

BACKGROUND:

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is aimed at reducing the impact of flooding on private and public structures. This is achieved by providing affordable insurance for qualifying property owners and by encouraging communities to adopt and enforce floodplain management regulations. Many levees in Oregon are in need of inspection or repair in order to maintain FEMA's accreditation under the NFIP. Previously, inspections were performed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; however, private engineering firms, which charge higher fees to cover liability insurance payments, are presently conducting the inspections.

Senate Bill 306 authorizes the Oregon Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA) to provide loans or grants for levee projects. Additionally, the measure authorizes the Water Resources Department to inspect, evaluate, and assess the

condition of a levee with the permission of the levee's owner. The measure also maintains the legal liabilities of a levee's owners.