

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Rural Communities, Land Use, and Water

Fiscal: Has minimal fiscal impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/19/15

Action: Do Pass And Be Placed On The Consent Calendar.

Meeting Dates: 04/28, 05/19

Vote:

Yeas: 7 - Clem, Gilliam, Gomberg, Helm, McLane, Post, Witt

Prepared By: Ian Davidson, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Water Resources Department (Department) to report to Eighty-first Legislative Assembly, no later than January 31, 2021, on pilot program allowing specified irrigation districts and water control districts to temporarily transfer water use to another location within district. Specifies water transferred under pilot project can only be used for irrigation. If any of specified districts are unable to participate, requires Department to publish notice of planned participation of another district in weekly notice and allow at least 20 days for public comment. Requires Department to annually publish notice of districts intending to use pilot project prior to commencement of irrigation season. Extends duration of pilot program from June 30, 2016 to January 2, 2022.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Changes in program since original passage in 2003
- Transfer cannot result in harm to another water right
- Bill limited to irrigation

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

In 2003, the Legislative Assembly enacted Senate Bill 820 authorizing a pilot project allowing certain irrigation districts to make annual place of use changes to water rights within their legal boundaries without applying to the Water Resources Department (Department) for a temporary transfer.

Senate Bill 267 A would extend the duration of the pilot project to January 2, 2022 and require the Department to report to the Eighty-first Legislative Assembly.