

HB 3293 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Water

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Meeting Dates: 3/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Authorizes water project support provider (provider) to make water project support available to local organizations and governments to develop and implement community engagement plans related to a water project. Requires that community engagement plans supported by provider utilize goals and approaches for increased participation of disproportionately impacted communities in decisions related to identification, scoping, design and implementation of water projects. Directs each provider, in coordination with other providers, to adopt and administer rules recognizing best practices for use by the provider, local organizations and local governments to ensure community engagement planning activities are carried out, and to update those rules as necessary. Authorizes provider to condition support for community engagement planning on local organization or government use of best practices to develop a plan for water project decision-making that invites and supports broad community participation, including disproportionately impacted communities and tribal participation; establishes specific goals for equitable participation and decision-making, and identifies specific approaches for use in meeting those goals; and provides periodic reporting on achievement of best practices in decision-making. Directs Water Resources Department to oversee coordination process and ensure that coordination process occurs at least once every five years. Defines terms.

May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

No subsequent referral.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Community engagement is increasingly encouraged as a method to improve water project outcomes. Community engagement focuses on initiatives that provide information, education, and awareness to the community; seek input, opinions, and preferences from the community; and build active and connected participation and decision-making. In the case of community water projects, this approach aims to explore a community's vision for local water practices and help find specific policy options that meet those needs.

House Bill 3293 would authorize water project support providers to make support available to local organizations and governments to develop local community engagement plans for water projects using provider-recognized best practices related to equitable and meaningful inclusion in water project planning and decision-making.