

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Item 42: Water Resources Department Fee-Based Services Support

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Natural Resources Subcommittee
Carrier: Senator Frederick

The Natural Resources Subcommittee heard a request from the Water Resources Department on fee-based services support.

In 2021, the Legislature provided the Water Resources Department with \$19.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act State Fiscal Recovery Funds for various projects and programs, including \$3 million designated as “revenue replacement” for fee-based programs. Of this total, \$459,722 in revenue has carried forward into the current biennium. The agency seeks a corresponding increase in Other Funds expenditure limitation to apply the unspent funds toward progress on the backlog of protested water right applications, supporting fee-based services by covering costs associated with cases referred to the Office of Administrative Hearings.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends that the Joint Interim Committee on Ways and Means include an increase of \$459,722 in Other Funds expenditure limitation for the Water Resources Department in a budget reconciliation bill during the 2026 legislative session for the continued support of water rights and other fee-based services.