

HB 2244 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery

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Meeting Dates: 5/12

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Provides that if the Water Resources Commission (Commission) or Water Resources Department (Department) deny a stay of a final order based on a determination that substantial public harm will result from the stay, and a petitioner requests a hearing on the denial: the court must hold the hearing not more than 21 days after the request and the denial of the stay remains in effect until the hearing has been held and the court has issued a decision. Provides that enforcement of a final order that regulated off a use of surface or groundwater in favor of a determined claim, in-stream water right held by a state agency, or water right or determined claim held by or in trust for a federally recognized Indian tribe may only be stayed on appeal if the petition is served on the Commission or Department and proof of service is filed with the court and is not stayed if Commission or Department deny the stay. Directs Commission or Department, not more than five business days after receiving a petition related to a water right or determined claim held by or in trust for a federally recognized Indian tribe, to send petition to the tribe. Applies to petitions filed on or after effective date of this Act.

House Vote: Ayes, 36; Nays, 20--Bonham, Boshart Davis, Breese-Iverson, Cate, Drazan, Hayden, Levy, Lewis, Moore-Green, Morgan, Owens, Post, Reschke, Smith DB, Smith G, Stark, Wallan, Weber, Wright, Zika; Excused, 4--Hudson, Leif, Nearman, Noble

FISCAL: Has minimal fiscal impact

REVENUE: No revenue impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon follows a prior appropriation doctrine of water use, often referred to as “first in time, first in right.” This means when there is insufficient water to satisfy all water rights, water users with senior priority dates may make a “call” to receive water and users with junior water rights do not receive water until senior water rights are satisfied. The regulation of junior water rights to meet the needs of senior users and the enforcement of orders addressing the use of water without a water right are accomplished through the issuance of final orders in other than contested cases.

ORS 536.075 (5) specifies that the filing in either circuit court or the Court of Appeals of a petition for review of a final order by the Water Resources Commission (Commission) or Department stays the enforcement of the order unless the Commission or Department determine that substantial public harm will result from a stay.

House Bill 2244 A would require a court to hold a hearing not more than 21 days after a request is made for a hearing on the denial of a stay of a final order by the Commission or Department and would establish that the the denial of the stay remains in effect until the hearing has been held and the court has issued a decision. The measure would also require a petition for review of an enforcement order that regulates a water use in favor of specified types of water rights to be served on the Commission or Department for the enforcement order to be eligible to be stayed.

This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.