

HB 3231 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Action Date: 03/16/23

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 8-0-1-0

Yeas: 8 - Boice, Gamba, Hartman, Helm, Levy B, Marsh, McLain, Owens

Exc: 1 - Scharf

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Anna Glueder, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/7, 3/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), in consultation with Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) and other relevant state agencies and interested parties, to study barriers and opportunities to expanding water reuse or recycled water programs in Oregon by (1) characterizing priority recycled water and beneficial land application project types in regard to water quality, water supply, or habitat and ecosystem needs; (2) identifying regulatory and other impediments to expanding water reuse and potential regulatory changes needed to remove them; (3) identifying environmentally friendly water reuse approaches in other states; and (4) developing technical assistance guidance for local jurisdictions and industries seeking permitting and development of recycled water and other beneficial land application programs related to water reuse. Requires DEQ to report findings to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2024, and specifies contents of the report. Appropriates \$340,000 and \$100,000 General Fund moneys to DEQ and OWRD respectively. Sunsets January 2, 2025. Takes effect on 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Importance of water reuse
- Potential benefits of water reuse programs
- Provisions of measure

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Appropriates \$340,000 General Fund moneys to the Department of Environmental Quality. Appropriates \$100,000 General Fund moneys to the Oregon Water Resources Department.

BACKGROUND:

Water reuse refers to water systems designed with the goal of beneficially reusing a recycled water supply. Requirements to align recycled water use with public health considerations are defined by rule (OAR 340-055-0012) and implemented by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in coordination with the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD), and the Department of Human Services Health Service Division. Under these rules, wastewater treatment plants are required to develop comprehensive site and facility specific water reuse management plans. In general, the type of allowable use of recycled water is determined by one of four associated treatment levels. Oregon enacted its first reuse policy in 1990 and since then, water reuse programs have been established throughout the state.

House Bill 3231 A appropriates \$340,000 and \$100,000 General Fund moneys to DEQ and OWRD, respectively and directs DEQ, in consultation with OWRD, to study barriers and opportunities for expanding water reuse or

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recycled water programs in Oregon.