

HB 3544 B BUDGET REPORT and MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Rep. Owens

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Action Date: 06/17/25

Action: Do pass with amendments to the A-Eng bill. (Printed B-Eng.)

House Vote

Yeas: 8 - Cate, Evans, Gomberg, Levy E, Owens, Ruiz, Sanchez, Valderrama

Nays: 3 - Breese-Iverson, Drazan, Smith G

Exc: 1 - Bowman

Senate Vote

Yeas: 9 - Anderson, Broadman, Campos, Frederick, Lieber, Manning Jr, McLane, Smith DB, Sollman

Nays: 2 - Bonham, Girod

Prepared By: Angela Parada, Department of Administrative Services

Reviewed By: April McDonald, Legislative Fiscal Office

Water Resources Department

2025-27

Budget Summary*

	2023-25 Legislatively Approved Budget ⁽¹⁾	2025-27 Current Service Level	2025-27 Committee Recommendation	Committee Change from 2023-25 Leg. Approved	
				\$ Change	% Change
General Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 226,420	\$ 226,420	100.0%
Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 226,420	\$ 226,420	100.0%

Position Summary

Authorized Positions	0	0	1	1
Full-time Equivalent (FTE) positions	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.75

⁽¹⁾ Includes adjustments through January 2025

* Excludes Capital Construction expenditures

Summary of Revenue Changes

For the 2025-27 biennium, House Bill 3544 appropriates \$226,420 General Fund to establish a uniform process and timeline for contested case proceedings on new water right and water right transfer applications, administered by the Water Resources Department (WRD).

Summary of Natural Resources Subcommittee Action

The Water Resources Commission, in coordination with the Office of Administrative Hearings, is directed to adopt rules establishing uniform hearing schedules and procedural standards. These rules must include a 180-day hearing timeline, provisions for remote participation, the use of administrative law judges for settlement, and consistent timelines for determining party status. House Bill 3544 also revises the requirements for protest submissions, establishes deadlines and criteria for party status requests, limits appeals, and clarifies when contested case hearings must occur.

To fund implementation of this measure, \$226,420 General Fund is appropriated to the Department's Water Right Services Division to establish a permanent, full-time Natural Resources Specialist 4 (0.75 FTE), including position-related services and supplies for the 2025-27 biennium. This position will also be able to address the cumulative impact to the Water Right Services division from the passage of additional measures related to water right transaction processing during the 2025 legislative session.

DETAIL OF JOINT COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS ACTION

Water Resources Department
CFO Analyst Angela Parada -- 971-720-0987

DESCRIPTION	GENERAL FUND	LOTTERY FUNDS	OTHER FUNDS		FEDERAL FUNDS		TOTAL ALL FUNDS	POS	FTE
			LIMITED	NONLIMITED	LIMITED	NONLIMITED			
SUBCOMMITTEE ADJUSTMENTS (from CSL)									
SCR 010-06 - Water Right Services Division									
Personal Services	\$ 200,110	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200,110	1	0.75
Services and Supplies	\$ 26,310	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 26,310		
TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS	\$ 226,420	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 226,420	1	0.75
SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION *	\$ 226,420	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 226,420	1	0.75

*Excludes Capital Construction Expenditures