



Legislative Council Staff

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FISCAL NOTE

Drafting Number: LLS 19-0540
Prime Sponsors: Rep. Arndt

Date: January 10, 2019
Bill Status: House Rural Affairs
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Bill Topic: RECREATION OF THE COLORADO WATER INSTITUTE

- Summary of Fiscal Impact:
- State Revenue (potential)
- State Expenditure
- State Transfer
- TABOR Refund
- Local Government
- Statutory Public Entity

This bill recreates the Colorado Water Institute and its advisory board which were automatically repealed July 1, 2017. It will increase revenue and expenditures for the institute and minimally increase workload for several state agencies through July 1, 2029.

Appropriation Summary: No appropriation is required.

Fiscal Note Status: The fiscal note reflects the introduced bill.

Summary of Legislation

The Colorado Water Institute (institute), a unit of Colorado State University (CSU), and the Advisory Committee on Water Research Policy automatically repealed effective July 1, 2017. This bill recreates the institute and advisory committee in state law until July 1, 2029.

The bill requires the institute to:

- consult with state and local governments, water managers and user associations, drought and climate change planning organizations and water quality planning organizations to identify and prioritize the state's scientific and policy-related water research needs;
develop, implement, and coordinate water and water-related research and policy analysis; and
create and operate a water research information and education center for water resources, water quality, and water-related policy issues.

The institute is authorized to accept and expend gifts, grants, donations, state appropriations, and other funding from any entity. It is also authorized to assess a fee of up to 20 percent of the total costs of a project it administers.

The advisory committee consists of at least 11 members, 8 of which are appointed by the director of the institute. The remaining members are the executive directors of the Department of Public Health and Environment and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Commissioner of Agriculture or their designees. The advisory committee recommends policy guidelines, confers with stakeholders to set Colorado's research priorities, and evaluates the institute's programs.

Background

The institute has an annual budget of approximately \$6.0 million from a variety of sources including CSU, state and federal funds, and funding from the Foundation for Food and Agricultural Research. The institute and the advisory committee have continued to exist even though both were repealed in July 2017. This bill will enable the institute to expend \$294,012 from prior year appropriations, fees assessed on projects, and interest that was frozen when the Institute was repealed.

The Colorado Water Conservation Board in the DNR contracts with the institute for \$300,000 to \$350,000 in research projects annually. If the institute is not recreated, this same amount of contracts will be funded but will be disbursed directly to researchers or other entities.

State Revenue

This bill allows the institute to increase revenue through fees for project administration. The institute does not currently charge this administrative fee, so no increase in revenue is expected.

State Expenditures

This bill will increase expenditures for the institute by allowing it to continue to operate and expend the \$294,012 fund balance in the continuously appropriated Water Research Fund.

The bill will also minimally increase workload for the Department of Agriculture, DNR, and the Department of Public Health and Environment to serve on the advisory committee. This workload increase can be accomplished within existing appropriations.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.

State and Local Government Contacts

Agriculture
Natural Resources

Higher Education
Public Health and Environment