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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **SB 446**

#### ***AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT GRANT AND PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM.***

#### **SUMMARY:**

This bill establishes an aquatic invasive species management grant and prevention and education program for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to administer. Under the program, DEEP may:

1. provide grants to municipalities for aquatic invasive species management efforts;
2. hire additional seasonal staff to enforce state law requiring vessels and trailers to be inspected for the presence of vegetation and aquatic invasive species;
3. educate boaters on ways to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species in the state's lakes; and
4. conduct a rapid response to an aquatic invasive species population identified in a state lake after July 1, 2014.

The bill authorizes the DEEP commissioner to adopt implementing regulations, which may include eligibility criteria and priorities for municipal grants.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

#### **MUNICIPAL GRANTS**

Under the bill, DEEP may make grants to a municipality for up to:

1. 75% of the cost of conducting an aquatic invasive species diagnostic feasibility study related to reducing an aquatic

invasive species population in a state lake or

2. 50% of the cost of conducting a restoration project in a state lake by controlling and managing an aquatic invasive species population that exists in the lake as of July 1, 2014.

### **USE OF FUNDS**

The bill requires DEEP to use at least 30% of the funds available under the program for municipal grants and allows up to 10% of the available program funds to be used for program administration. The remaining funds must be used for the enforcement, education, and rapid response efforts. The bill does not identify a funding source.

### **BACKGROUND**

#### ***Aquatic Invasive Species***

Aquatic invasive species are non-native aquatic plants or animals that tend to grow at such a rate that they displace native species and disrupt the ecosystem. They include, for example, Eurasian milfoil, fanwort, zebra mussel, quagga mussel, Chinese mitten crab, New Zealand mud snail, Asian clam, and rusty crayfish.

### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 27    Nay 0    (03/21/2014)