
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 7194

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PUBLIC DRINKING WATER.

SUMMARY

This bill allows public water system public service companies regulated by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) to receive grants from the Department of Public Health's (DPH) Public Water System Improvement Program. Current law limits program eligibility to municipal water companies and nonprofit non-community water systems (i.e., facilities served by their own water supply).

Under the bill, the water system may receive a program grant only if (1) it serves at least 25 people or at least 15 year-round service connections, (2) the grant is used for an eligible drinking water project approved for financial assistance under DPH's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Program (see BACKGROUND), and (3) DPH consulted with PURA about the grant.

Existing law, unchanged by the bill, limits program grants to (1) 50% of eligible project costs for systems serving up to 10,000 people and (2) 30% of eligible project costs for systems serving more than 10,000 people.

Additionally, the bill requires DPH to amend its regulations to include standards and procedures for it to approve third-parties to administer certification exams to operators of water treatment plants, water distribution systems, and small water systems. The regulations must also include standards and procedures for DPH to approve study courses and course providers related to these operators, as well as those who test backflow prevention devices and perform cross-connection surveys.

The bill also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

BACKGROUND

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

Under the DWSRF program, DPH awards loans equal to 100% of eligible project costs to eligible drinking water projects, based on a priority list for funding it establishes and maintains. Eligible project costs include, among other things, labor, materials, machinery, land, or easements. DPH's Public Water System Improvement Program grants may be used to forgive the principal on DWSRF loans.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 23 Nay 0 (03/08/2019)