



2019 SENATE BILL 779

February 6, 2020 - Introduced by Senators SMITH, OLSEN, LARSON, RISSER and SCHACHTNER, cosponsored by Representatives SHANKLAND, NYGREN, NOVAK, POPE, HEBL, BILLINGS, ANDERSON, BROSTOFF, CABRERA, CONSIDINE, FIELDS, GRUSZYNSKI, HESSELBEIN, KITCHENS, KOLSTE, KRUG, NEUBAUER, OHNSTAD, SARGENT, SINICKI, SPIROS, SPREITZER, STUBBS, SUBECK, C. TAYLOR, TUSLER and VRUWINK. Referred to Committee on Government Operations, Technology and Consumer Protection.

1 **AN ACT to amend** 25.60 and 299.97 (2); and **to create** 13.59, 20.855 (4) (fb), 25.44
2 and 299.87 of the statutes; **relating to:** creating the water fund for our future.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill creates a new nonlapsible trust fund, designated as the water fund for our future, to consist of \$10,000,000 transferred biennially from the general fund. Under the bill, the Joint Committee on Finance may at any time transfer any amount of the unencumbered balance from the fund to the budget stabilization fund, if the budget stabilization fund has been fully expended.

The bill also creates the Joint Committee for the Oversight of the Water Fund for Our Future. Under the bill, the committee receives applications for making expenditures from the fund and makes recommendations to JCF regarding use of the fund.

Under the bill, the committee may also recommend to JCF an amount to transfer to a rapid response account created within the water fund for our future, which may be used by the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Health Services to respond to natural disasters and public health emergencies. Funds from the rapid response account may be used for the costs of remediation and to notify, relocate, and assist people affected by the natural disaster or public health emergency.

The bill also allows DNR and the Department of Justice to seek reimbursement from responsible parties for funds expended from the water fund for our future.

Finally, the bill allows any agency to submit a request to JCF for supplemental funds from the water fund for our future. JCF may approve the request after

SENATE BILL 779

considering any recommendation from the Joint Committee for the Oversight of the Water Fund for Our Future.

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

1 **SECTION 1.** 13.59 of the statutes is created to read:

2 **13.59 Joint committee for the oversight of the water fund for our**
3 **future. (1) CREATION.** There is created a joint standing committee for the oversight
4 of the water fund for our future composed of 3 majority party and 2 minority party
5 senators and 3 majority party and 2 minority party representatives to the assembly,
6 appointed as are the members of standing committees in their respective houses.

7 **(2) OFFICERS.** In making appointments of the members of each house, each
8 house shall designate a cochairperson.

9 **(3) STAFF.** The committee shall be staffed as are other standing committees of
10 the legislature.

11 **(4) MEETINGS.** The committee shall meet as often as necessary to perform its
12 duties and functions.

13 **(5) POWERS AND DUTIES. (a)** The committee shall do all of the following:

14 1. Receive applications for making expenditures from the water fund for our
15 future and make recommendations to the joint committee on finance regarding use
16 of the water fund for our future.

17 2. Recommend to the joint committee on finance an amount to transfer from
18 the water fund for our future to the rapid response account under s. 25.44 (3).

SENATE BILL 779

1 **(3)** There is established in the water fund for our future a rapid response
2 account consisting of all moneys transferred to the account by the joint committee
3 on finance, which may at any time transfer any amount of the unencumbered balance
4 from the water fund for our future to the rapid response account. Moneys in the rapid
5 response account shall be reserved for discretionary use by the department of
6 natural resources and the department of health services under s. 299.87.

7 **SECTION 5.** 25.60 of the statutes is amended to read:

8 **25.60 Budget stabilization fund.** There is created a separate nonlapsible
9 trust fund designated as the budget stabilization fund, consisting of moneys
10 transferred to the fund from the general fund under ss. 16.518 (3) and 16.72 (4) (b)
11 and any moneys transferred to the fund from the water fund for our future under s.
12 25.44. Moneys in the budget stabilization fund are reserved to provide state revenue
13 stability during periods of below-normal economic activity when actual state
14 revenues are lower than estimated revenues under s. 20.005 (1).

15 **SECTION 6.** 299.87 of the statutes is created to read:

16 **299.87 Rapid response; supplemental funding requests from the water**
17 **fund for our future.** (1) The department and the department of health services
18 may use moneys from the rapid response account of the water fund for our future
19 under s. 25.44 to respond to natural disasters and public health emergencies. Funds
20 from the rapid response account may be used for the costs of remediation and to
21 notify, relocate, and assist people affected by the natural disaster or public health
22 emergency. The department and the department of health services may promulgate
23 rules as necessary to establish procedures and policies for the use of moneys from the
24 rapid response account.

