

AMENDMENTS TO LB 517

(Amendments to Final Reading copy)

Introduced by Lathrop

1 1. Strike the original sections and insert the following
2 new sections:

3 Section 1. The Legislature finds that:

4 (1) Nebraska's water resources are finite and must
5 be wisely managed to ensure their continued availability for
6 beneficial use;

7 (2) The state must invest in: (a) Research and data
8 gathering; (b) further integrating the management of Nebraska's
9 water supplies; (c) improving the state's aging and antiquated
10 water supply infrastructure; (d) building new water supply
11 infrastructure; (e) promoting coordination and collaboration among
12 all water users; and (f) providing information to policymakers to
13 justify a stable source of project funds; and

14 (3) To determine the costs of effective conservation,
15 sustainability, and management of Nebraska's water resources, the
16 state's identified water needs must be compiled and organized and a
17 process must be established in order to identify statewide projects
18 and research recommendations.

19 Sec. 2. (1) The Water Sustainability Committee is created
20 as a special legislative committee. The committee shall consist
21 of the chairperson of the Natural Resources Committee of the
22 Legislature and six members appointed by the Executive Board of

1 the Legislative Council and shall be chaired by the chairperson of
2 the Natural Resources Committee. The Water Sustainability Committee
3 shall meet as often as necessary to accomplish the objectives
4 established in sections 1 to 4 of this act. Meetings shall be held
5 in Lincoln as well as other locations outside Lincoln as determined
6 by the chairperson.

7 (2) The Water Sustainability Committee terminates on
8 December 31, 2013.

9 Sec. 3. The Water Sustainability Committee may consult
10 with other groups in its work, including, but not limited to, the
11 University of Nebraska, the Department of Environmental Quality,
12 the Game and Parks Commission, the United States Army Corps of
13 Engineers, the United States Geological Survey, the United States
14 Fish and Wildlife Service, the United States Bureau of Reclamation,
15 and the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States
16 Department of Agriculture.

17 Sec. 4. (1) On or before December 31, 2013, the
18 Water Sustainability Committee shall develop and provide a report
19 electronically to the Legislature which contains the following:

20 (a) Recommendations for a strategic plan which
21 prioritizes programs, projects, and activities in need of funding.
22 The recommendations shall give equal consideration to and be
23 classified into the following categories:

24 (i) Research, data, and modeling needed to assist the
25 state in meeting its water management goals;

26 (ii) Rehabilitation or restoration of water supply
27 infrastructure, new water supply infrastructure, or water supply

1 infrastructure maintenance;

2 (iii) Conjunctive management, storage, and integrated
3 management of ground water and surface water; and

4 (iv) Compliance with interstate compacts or agreements or
5 other formal state contracts or agreements;

6 (b) Recommendations for ranking criteria to identify
7 funding priorities based on, but not limited to, the following
8 factors:

9 (i) The extent to which the program, project, or activity
10 provides increased water productivity and otherwise maximizes the
11 beneficial use of Nebraska's water resources for the benefit of its
12 residents;

13 (ii) The extent to which the program, project, or
14 activity assists the state in meeting its obligations under
15 interstate compacts or decrees or other formal state contracts
16 or agreements;

17 (iii) The extent to which the program, project, or
18 activity utilizes objectives described in the Annual Report and
19 Plan of Work for the Nebraska State Water Planning and Review
20 Process issued by the Department of Natural Resources;

21 (iv) The extent to which the program, project, or
22 activity has been approved for, but has not received, funding
23 through an established state program;

24 (v) The cost effectiveness of the program, project, or
25 activity relative to achieving the state's water management goals;

26 (vi) The extent to which the program, project, or
27 activity contributes to the state's ability to leverage state

1 dollars with local or federal government partners or other partners
2 to maximize the use of its resources; and

3 (vii) The extent to which the program, project, or
4 activity contributes to multiple water supply management goals,
5 including, but not limited to, flood control, agricultural
6 uses, recreation benefits, wildlife habitat, conservation of
7 water resources, and preservation of water resources for future
8 generations;

9 (c) Recommendations for legislation on a permanent
10 structure and process through which the programs, projects, or
11 activities described in this section will be provided with funding,
12 including:

13 (i) A permanent governing board structure and membership;

14 (ii) An application process;

15 (iii) A statewide project distribution mechanism; and

16 (iv) A timeframe for funding allocations based on the
17 list of programs, projects, and activities provided for in this
18 section;

19 (d) Recommendations for the annual funding amount and the
20 start date for distribution of funds; and

21 (e) Recommendations for statutory changes relating to
22 regulatory authorities and to funds and programs administered by,
23 and boards and commissions under the direction of, the department,
24 based on the committee's evaluation of the efficiency of such
25 funds, programs, boards, and commissions.

26 (2) The recommendations of the committee shall be reached
27 by consensus, and the vote of each committee member on each

1 recommendation shall be recorded as In Favor, Opposed, or Not
2 Voting and published in the report.

3 (3) The committee shall make every effort to identify and
4 consult with all water use stakeholder groups in Nebraska on the
5 development of the recommendations required under sections 1 to 4
6 of this act.

7 Sec. 5. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect
8 when passed and approved according to law.

9 2. On page 1, strike beginning with line 2 through the
10 first semicolon in line 4 and insert "the Water Sustainability
11 Committee; to provide powers and duties;".