

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION - 2016
COMMITTEE STATEMENT
LB737

Hearing Date: Wednesday January 20, 2016
Committee On: Natural Resources
Introducer: Friesen
One Liner: Change provisions of the Wastewater Treatment Facilities Construction Assistance Act

Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:
Advanced to General File

Vote Results:

Aye: 8 Senators Friesen, Hughes, Johnson, Kolowski, Lindstrom, McCollister, Schnoor, Schilz
Nay:
Absent:
Present Not Voting:

Verbal Testimony:

Proponents:

Senator Curt Friesen
Jim Macy

Representing:

Introducer
Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality

Opponents:

Representing:

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) is a federal-state partnership that provides low-cost financing for water quality infrastructure projects. A federal infrastructure reform bill passed in 2014 that expanded eligibility for water resources projects, extended financing terms for loans, and increased the amount of funds that could be used by the state for administration. LB 737 affects the Nebraska CWSRF, which provides low interest loans and small community matching grants to municipalities for construction of wastewater treatment facilities and sanitary sewer collection systems. The bill:

adds "land" to the wastewater treatment works definition so that the fund can be used for acquisition of land for wastewater treatment works;

states that the fund may be used pursuant to the Wastewater Treatment Facilities Construction Assistance Act, in addition to the Clean Water Act and eliminates a more narrow purpose;

states that, in addition to up to 4 percent of the EPA capitalization grants, the state may choose \$400,000 per year, or the equivalent of 1/5 (.20) percent per year of the current valuation of the fund for administration;

expands the funding categories to public entities, including the acquisition of land for construction, water conservation and efficiency, development and implementation of watershed projects, and projects to increase the security of treatment works;

adds that capacity for domestic and industrial growth must be provided up to the term of the loan, but no less than 20 years; and

allows for 30-year loan terms or a term for the useful life of the project, whichever is less.

Ken Schilz, Chairperson