

A RESOLUTION

Directing the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study of the establishment, implementation, and administration of fees for the consumptive use and degradation of water.

WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is estimated to have more than more than 83,000 miles of streams, nearly 4,000 lakes, and 80 trillion gallons of groundwater.

WHEREAS, The demand for water continues to grow, with withdrawals of surface and groundwater estimated to exceed 10 billion gallons per day.

WHEREAS, billions of gallons of water are either never returned to Pennsylvania's water cycle or returned in a degraded condition each day.

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth receives no compensation for either the consumptive use or degradation of water.

WHEREAS, Article 1, Section 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution provides as follows: The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people.

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives/Senate direct the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to study the establishment of both a fee for the consumptive use of water and a fee for the degradation of water; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the study examine proposed and successful attempts of other states to assess fees for the consumptive use or degradation of natural resources; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the study identify the consumptive and degrading uses to which the fees would apply; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the study estimate the revenue generating potential of the fees; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the study recommend conservation purposes and programs that should benefit from the revenues generated by the fees; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the study evaluate how to assess, collect, manage, and allocate the proceeds of the fees, including, but not limited to, an evaluation of existing models within the Commonwealth; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee be authorized to seek a contractor or consultant to assist in this study; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee report all findings and conclusions on this issue to the House of Representatives/Senate within 12 months of the adoption of this resolution.