

ARIZONA STATE LEGISLATURE

JOINT LEGISLATIVE AD HOC STUDY COMMITTEE ON WATER SECURITY

Minutes of the Meeting

June 28, 2024

1:00 P.M., SHR 1

Members of the public may access a livestream of the meeting here:

<https://www.azleg.gov/videoplayer/?clientID=6361162879&eventID=2024061051>

Members Present:

Senator Sine Kerr, Co-Chair
Senator Brian Fernandez
Senator Thomas "T.J." Shope

Representative Gail Griffin, Co-Chair
Representative Timothy M. Dunn

Members Excused:

Representative Christopher Mathis

Staff:

Rachel Andrews, Senate Research Analyst
Emily Bonner, House Research Analyst
Blanca Santillan Ramos, House Research Analyst

Co-Chair Kerr called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. and attendance was noted.

Co-Chairs Kerr and Griffin offered comments.

Overview of Amended SB 1221 – Senate Research Staff

Co-Chair Kerr gave an overview of SB 1221.

Rachel Andrews, Natural, Energy and Water Research Analyst, distributed and explained a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Basin Management Areas (BMA), S.B. 1221 As Amended" (Attachment A).

Comparison of AMAs, INAs, and BMAs – Dan Jones, Salmon Lewis & Weldon PLC

Dan Jones, Attorney, Salmon, Lewis & Weldon PLC, gave an overview of Active Management Areas (AMAs), Irrigation Non-Expansion Areas (INAs), Basin Management Areas (BMA) and answered questions posed by the Committee.

The Committee offered comments.

Agricultural Perspective on Groundwater Management Act Origins – Ron Rayner

Ronald Rayner, Farmer, A Tumbling T Ranches, gave an overview of the history of Arizona groundwater management, technology and efficiency in water usage and answered questions posed by the Committee.

The Committee offered comments.

Overview of Changes and Concessions Made from Introduced SB 1221 to Current SB 1221 – Stefanie Smallhouse, Arizona Farm Bureau Federation

Stefanie Smallhouse, State President, Arizona Farm Bureau Federation, gave an overview of the introduced version of SB 1221, the amended version and explained the impact for farmers future of water use. Ms. Smallhouse answered questions posed by the Committee.

The Committee offered comments.

Significance and Value of Closing a Basin on Rural Economies, Groundwater Conservation, and Aquifer Protection –

- a. **Ryan Mitchell, Arizona Department of Water Resources, Chief Hydrologist**, distributed and explained a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Joint Legislative Ad Hoc Study Committee on Water Security" (Attachment B) and answered questions posed by the Committee.
- b. **George Frisvold, University of Arizona, Dept of Agricultural Economics, Professor, Extension Specialist**, distributed and explained a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Economic impacts of groundwater restrictions in the Gila Bend and Wilcox Basins" (Attachment C) and answered questions posed by the Committee.
- c. **Bas Aja, Arizona Cattle Feeder' Association, Executive Vice President**, explained the closing of water basins, SB 1221, the economic effects and answered questions posed by the Committee.

Agricultural Industry Testimony on Good Faith Negotiations –

- a. **Phil Bashaw, Arizona Farm Bureau Federation, Chief Executive Officer**, shared his involvement in the negotiations of SB 1221, the agricultural industry and the negotiation process.
- b. **Nicholas Kenney, Maricopa County Farm Bureau, President**, shared the Bureau's viewpoint of the negotiations and water issues of SB 1221.
- c. **Zach Fort, United Dairymen of Arizona**, no presentation took place.
- d. **Rob VanHofwegen Jr., Paloma Irrigation & Drainage District, District Manager**, testified on the effects of SB 1221, water conservation on the state and answered questions posed by the Committee.
- e. **Robert Medler, Western Growers Association, Government Affairs Manager**, testified in support of the efforts for farmers in the negotiations of SB 1221, the future of food and answered questions posed by the Committee.

The Committee offered comments.

- f. **Jadee Rohner, Arizona Cotton Growers Association, Executive Director**, testified on the efforts of the negotiations of SB 1221 and effective water policies.
- g. **Patrick Bray, Arizona Farm & Ranch Group**, no presentation took place.

Other Water Bills Introduced this Session –

Co-Chair Griffin announced the sponsors and reviewed the end results of the water related bills.

- a. SB1081 (exemption area; assured water supply) (signed), sponsor Senator Kerr.
- b. SB1181 (groundwater replenishment; member lands; areas) (signed), sponsor Senator Petersen.
- c. SB1242 (Harquahala; groundwater transportation) (signed), sponsor Senator Shope.
- d. HB2016 (grandfathered right; subsequent AMA; extension) (signed), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- e. HCR2051 (rural communities; groundwater; tools) (adopted), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- f. SB1172 (land division; water; transportation; turf) (vetoed), sponsor Senator Shope.
- g. HB2013 (water improvements program; nonprofit corporations) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- h. HB2017 (assured water supply; commingling) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- i. HB2019 (groundwater model; public inspection; challenge) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- j. HB2020 (long-term storage; stormwater; rainwater; rules) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- k. HB2027 (subsequent AMAs; assured water supply) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- l. HB2127 (assured water supply; certificate; effluent) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- m. HB2060 (irrigation non-expansion area; Willcox basin) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Griffin. Co-Chair Griffin announced that HB 2060 did not pass the House.
- n. HB2062 (assured water supply; certificate; model) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- o. HB2063 (exempt wells; certificate; groundwater use) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- p. HB2123 (wells; water measuring devices; prohibition) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Smith.

- q. HB2124 (agricultural operations; water; protection; definition) (vetoed), sponsor Representative Smith.
- r. HB2368 (transportation; groundwater; Douglas AMA) (signed), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- s. HB2008 (commercial; industrial; conservation requirements) (did not pass), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- t. HB2014 (water infrastructure; bonds) (did not pass), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- u. HB2022 (water improvement district; Willcox basin) (did not pass), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- v. HB2025 (residential lease community; water; requirements) (did not pass), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- w. HB2030 (cities; towns; water service; audit) (did not pass), sponsor Representative Griffin.
- x. HB2099 (active management area; groundwater right) (did not pass), sponsor Representative Griffin.

The Committee offered comments.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracey Gardner
Committee Secretary

(Audio recordings and attachments are on file in the Secretary of the Senate's Office/Resource Center, Room 115. Audio archives are available at <http://www.azleg.gov>)