



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AMENDMENT MEMO

2011 Assembly Bill 301

Assembly Amendments 1 and 3

Memo published: November 2, 2011

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2011 Assembly Bill 301 prohibits the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) from expending any federal funds received under the Pittman-Robertson Act¹ unless DNR first notifies the Joint Finance Committee in writing of the project or activity for which DNR proposes to expend the funds.

Under the bill, if the co-chairs of the Joint Finance Committee do not notify DNR within 14 working days after the date DNR notifies the committee of the proposal that the committee has scheduled a meeting to review the proposal, the DNR may expend the funds. If the co-chairs of the Joint Finance Committee notify DNR within 14 working days after DNR notifies the committee of the proposal that the committee has scheduled a meeting to review the proposal, DNR may expend the funds only after the Joint Finance Committee approves it.

Assembly Amendment 1 provides that DNR expenditure of federal funds received under the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Recreation Act, or Dingell-Johnson Act², is subject to the same prohibition and Joint Finance Committee passive review process provided in the bill.

¹ The Pittman Robertson Act provides federal grant funds to state fish and wildlife agencies. Eligible activities under the Act include the restoration, conservation, management, and enhancement of wild birds and wild mammals, and the provision for public use of land and benefits from these resources; and the education of hunters and archers in the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to be responsible hunters or archers. The grants are funded through an 11% excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition and a 10% tax on sales of pistols and revolvers. The formula for distribution to the states is based on the number of hunting licenses sold and the size of the state.

² The Dingell-Johnson Act provides federal grant funds to states for projects which include fish restoration and management projects, fisheries research, and improving public access to waters for recreational boating purposes. The grants are funded by a 10% excise tax on certain sport fishing equipment, a 3% excise tax on electric outboard motors and sonar fish-finding devices, and import duties of fishing tackle, yachts, and pleasure craft. The formula for distribution to the states is based on the number of fishing licenses sold and the amount of water acreage in the state.

Assembly Amendment 3 limits the Joint Finance Committee passive review of a proposed DNR expenditure of Pittman Robertson or Dingell-Johnson Act funds to a project or activity that exceeds \$20,000 and shortens the Joint Finance Committee notification requirement in the bill from 14 working days to 7 working days. Assembly Amendment 3 also adds a new provision that requires DNR, on or before March 15 of each even-numbered year, to submit to the Assembly and Senate Chief Clerks for distribution to the appropriate standing committees, a report identifying the DNR's use and expenditure of funds provided to DNR under both federal acts.

Legislative History

On October 25, 2011, the Assembly adopted Assembly Amendment 1 and Assembly Amendment 3. On November 1, 2011, the Assembly passed the bill, as amended, on a vote of Ayes, 63; Noes, 32; Paired, 2.

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