



2011 SENATE BILL 443

February 8, 2012 - Introduced by Senator S. FITZGERALD, cosponsored by Representative KLEEFISCH. Referred to Committee on Financial Institutions and Rural Issues.

1 **AN ACT to amend** 31.385 (7) of the statutes; **relating to:** financial assistance to
2 towns for certain dam safety projects.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has bonding authority to provide funding for a financial assistance program for projects that ensure dam safety by maintaining, repairing, removing, or abandoning dams. Dam owners, including cities, villages, towns, counties, and public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, are eligible to receive assistance only if DNR has issued a directive or order that the owner take action to ensure the dam's safety. The maximum amount of financial assistance for a dam safety project is \$400,000. The program is supported by bonding authority with the debt service being paid from both the general fund and the conservation fund.

In addition to this bonding authority, current law requires that, beginning with fiscal year 2011-12 and ending with fiscal year 2019-20, at least \$6,000,000 in bonding authority must be set aside from the land acquisition subprogram of the Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship 2000 Program for providing financial assistance to counties for these dam safety projects (stewardship assistance). To be eligible for stewardship assistance, a county must be under a DNR order to safeguard a dam that the county owns, and the order must have been in effect on July 1, 2011. The maximum amount of stewardship assistance that may be provided for a dam safety project is \$2,500,000. This bill expands the entities that are eligible for stewardship assistance to include towns.

