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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. 4204

03/10/2022

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The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to water; establishing an Office of Water Policy; requiring reports;
1.3 appropriating money; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter
1.4 103A.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. 103A.101 OFFICE OF WATER POLICY.

1.7 Subdivision 1. Establishment. The Office of Water Policy is established. The office
1.8 consists of eight members appointed by the governor. One of the members must be selected
1.9 by the governor to serve as the director of the Office of Water Policy. The member
1.10 appointments are subject to the advice and consent of the senate.

1.11 Subd. 2. Office; administration. The commissioner of administration must provide
1.12 administrative services for the Office of Water Policy.

1.13 Subd. 3. Purpose. The purpose of the Office of Water Policy is to provide research and
1.14 analysis of policies and practices relating to groundwater and surface water use, protection,
1.15 and enhancement.

1.16 Subd. 4. Duties. The Office of Water Policy must:

1.17 (1) develop improved methods for planning and assessing the water balance between
1.18 major aquifer systems and between groundwater and surface water and share that information
1.19 with state agencies, the legislature, and local governmental units;

1.20 (2) propose methods for securing private and public drinking water supplies by:

1.21 (i) developing a single assessment and management plan for public sources of drinking
1.22 water;

- 2.1 (ii) assessing plans for additional testing of private drinking water wells; and
- 2.2 (iii) addressing elevated lead and other contaminant levels in drinking water sources, in
- 2.3 cooperation with the commissioners of health and natural resources, by reviewing and
- 2.4 updating acceptable levels of contamination;
- 2.5 (3) cooperate with state agencies, businesses, research labs, volunteer organizations,
- 2.6 and other interested parties to develop methods of predicting and responding to contaminants
- 2.7 of emerging concern and collecting toxicological data and laboratory findings useful for
- 2.8 accurate screening of water contaminants with the potential to harm humans or the ecological
- 2.9 balance;
- 2.10 (4) advise appropriate agencies, legislative committees, and public works projects of
- 2.11 emerging technologies that could be used to replace, strengthen, or enhance water policy
- 2.12 objectives or improve their practice; and
- 2.13 (5) review and offer assessment of current policies and practices relating to groundwater
- 2.14 and surface water use with attention to the sustainability of those programs and the
- 2.15 advisability of replacing or modifying those policies.

2.16 Subd. 5. **Powers.** The director of the Office of Water Policy may:

- 2.17 (1) direct and control money appropriated to the director;
- 2.18 (2) apply for, receive, and spend money for the purposes of this section;
- 2.19 (3) employ staff that the director considers necessary for the purposes of this section;
- 2.20 (4) enter into interdepartmental agreements with any other state agency; and
- 2.21 (5) enter into joint powers agreements under chapter 471.

2.22 Subd. 6. **Report.** By January 15 each year, the director of the Office of Water Policy

2.23 must submit a report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees

2.24 and divisions with jurisdiction over the environment and natural resources on the office's

2.25 performance in achieving its purpose under this section and how money appropriated to the

2.26 office was expended.

2.27 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATIONS.**

2.28 (a) \$..... in fiscal year 2023 is appropriated from the clean water fund to the director of

2.29 the Office of Water Policy for the purposes of Minnesota Statutes, section 103A.101.

2.30 (b) \$..... in fiscal year 2023 is appropriated from the general fund to the director of the

2.31 Office of Water Policy for the purposes of Minnesota Statutes, section 103A.101.