



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

Olds Plaza Building, 10th Floor
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: 517/373-8486

STORMWATER TREATMENT FUNDS

AS ENROLLED

House Bill 4500 as introduced
First Analysis (4-1-93)

Sponsor: Rep. Mary C. Brown
Committee: Conservation, Environment
& Great Lakes Affairs

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

One of the many daunting environmental concerns facing Michigan and its communities today involves the problem of combined sewer overflows (CSOs), in which waterways are polluted when inadequate, usually older, sewer systems are flooded during storms. When heavy rains fill storm sewers to capacity, excess storm waters become too great for local wastewater treatment plants to handle, resulting in raw sewage and other contaminants being carried away to inland lakes or rivers. Pollutants from such discharges often end up in Great Lakes waters, where they contribute to a growing pollution problem in the world's largest fresh water source. Public Sector Consultants, a Lansing-based research group, has estimated that up to 20 billion gallons of contaminated wastewater are discharged into state waterways annually. The state, via the Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund, now provides various forms of assistance to local governments for certain types of public improvements, as required by the federal Water Pollution Control Act. Although the act that created and provides for the fund's use does not specifically address the issue, local stormwater treatment projects apparently qualify for financial assistance from the fund based on language currently in the federal act. But in order to make local governments more aware of this fact, legislation has been introduced that would add to the list of projects that explicitly would qualify for financial assistance from the State Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund stormwater treatment projects.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

Currently, as specified in the State Clean Water Assistance Act, the State Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund provides various forms of financial assistance to local governments for certain types of public improvements. The bill would amend the act to include stormwater treatment projects under

those projects eligible for assistance from the fund. (The bill would define a "stormwater treatment project" to mean construction activities on any device or system for the treatment, storage, recycling, or reclamation of stormwater that is conveyed by a storm sewer that is separate from a sanitary sewer.)

MCL 323.453 et al.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

The Department of Natural Resources says that because financial assistance from the fund already may be provided to local governments for stormwater treatment projects, as authorized under Title VI, Section 212 of the federal Water Pollution Control Act, the bill would not affect state or local budget expenditures. (3-30-93)

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The bill simply would add to the list of projects that qualify for financial assistance from the State Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund stormwater treatment projects. The federal Water Pollution Control Act currently authorizes states to use money from their respective pollution control revolving funds to assist local governments in paying for stormwater treatment projects, but local governments may not realize that such projects may qualify for financial assistance from the fund. By specifically listing them in the act, the bill would help make local governments more aware that financial assistance for such projects could be obtained via the fund.

POSITIONS:

The Department of Natural Resources supports the bill. (3-30-93)

House Bill 4500 (4-1-93)

**The Michigan Municipal League supports the bill.
(3-30-93)**

**The Michigan United Conservation Clubs supports
the bill. (3-30-93)**

**The Michigan Recreation and Park Association
supports the bill. (3-30-93)**

**The Michigan Environmental Council supports the
concept of the bill. (3-30-93)**