

House Research Act Summary

CHAPTER: 243

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TOPIC: Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources

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Overview

This bill is a product of a legislatively-mandated advisory task force that met over the interim and looked into several changes in the work of the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCMR), including adding citizens to make funding recommendations from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund and clarifying the importance of the strategic plan to aid the funding recommendations. The bill amends several provisions of chapter 116P.

- 1 **Public official definition.** Includes the new seven citizens in the restructured commission as "public officials", under section 10A.01, for full public disclosure when appointed.
- 2 **New name.** Names the existing LCMR the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR).
- 3 **Trust fund appropriation procedure.** Adds to existing section 116P.03 language that trust fund annual appropriations will be made by a law passed by the legislature and signed by the governor; and that the appropriations have to be consistent with the constitutional provision, the strategic plan, and other chapter 116P provisions.
- 4 **Technical.** For required audits on trust fund expenditures.
- 5 **LCCMR.**

Subd. 1. Lists membership of 17 members, five legislators each from the senate and house, including the chairs of the environment and natural resources finance committees, and seven citizens, five appointed by the governor and one each appointed by the senate and the house. Two legislative members from each body must be from the minority caucus. The chair must rotate between legislative and citizen

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members. Citizen members are appointed for initial staggered terms, and all LCCMR members serve until their successors are appointed.

Citizen members must have environment and natural resource experience, know the issues, and show ability to work collaboratively.

Subd. 1a. Provides for a citizen selection committee, appointed by the governor, who shall identify a number of qualified citizen members, interview them, and recommend a pool of candidates for selection to the LCCMR by the governor and the legislature.

Subd. 2. States that the new commission needs an affirmative vote of 12 members or more to approve a recommended trust fund expenditure bill to the full legislature. A new clause (f) describes elements in the advisory task force report that the LCCMR must account for in its operating procedures.

Subd. 3. Sunsets the new commission and its duties on June 30, 2016.

6 **Technical.** For information gathering by the new commission.

7 **Strategic plan.** What the trust fund may or may not be used for stays the same as current law. Amends the strategic plan for expenditures by stating it must have clear short and long term goals, it must have measurable outcomes, and it must determine areas of emphasis for funding. Provides that the LCCMR also must consider the strategic plans of environment and natural resource agencies, and those of conservation and environmental organizations.

8 **Authorizing new funding techniques.** Allows the new commission to recommend regional block grants for trust fund expenditures in order to partner with regional organizations for stronger local impact, and the LCCMR may recommend an annual emerging issues account for unexpected issues that would have to be approved by the governor.

9 **Technical.** For meeting throughout the state.

10 **Peer review.** Provides that peer-reviewed research projects must have a stated purpose connected to the trust fund's constitutional mandate, chapter 116P and the strategic plan.

11 **Technical.**

12 **Technical.** For conflict of interest provision.

13 **Technical advisory committees.** Provides for use of available public and private expertise by the LCCMR to appoint committees to review funding proposals and evaluate project outcomes.

14 **Technical.** For allowance of annual trust fund appropriations.

15 **2005 energy project.** Adds financial assistance to the clean energy resource teams and community wind energy rebate program, and makes the funding available until June 30, 2009.

16 **Carryforward.** Makes the local initiative grant appropriation available until June 30, 2007; and the one for Minnesota Landscape Arboretum available until June 30, 2008.

17 **Continuity.** Allows the current LCMR to operate until the new membership of the LCCMR is appointed, but not later than August 15, 2006. Provides that the current LCMR staff shall be the staff for the new LCCMR.

18 **Legislative member transition.** States that legislative service on the current LCMR does not count for term limit purposes to serve on the new LCCMR.

19 **Appropriation.** Appropriates \$550,000 in fiscal year 2007 for commission administration, and allows the fiscal year 2006 LCMR budget to carryover for closing any gaps in the

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transition period for the new commission.

- 20** **Vetoed appropriations.** Reestablishes some of the 2005 vetoed appropriations, some at reduced amounts, including understanding groundwater, Phillips Biomass, Laurentian energy biomass, land cover mapping, Lake Superior research, climate changed aquatic impact, land exchange revolving fund, iparian land acquisition, statewide conservation plan, and forest legacy easements.
- 21** **Revisor's instruction.** Requires the Revisor, after August 1, 2006, to change LCMR statutory references to LCCMR.
- 22** **Repealer.** Repeals the existing statutes for the Citizen's Advisory Committee to the LCMR, and the sunset passed last session for June 30, 2006.
- 23** **Effective date.** Makes the citizen selection committee appointment and interview process effective the day following final enactment, and the remainder of the bill effective June 1, 2006.