

HB 778 INTRODUCED BY JENKINS, ET AL.
IRRIGATION SCHEDULING PROGRAM

2/16	INTRODUCED		
2/16	REFERRED TO AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK & IRRIGATION		
2/16	FISCAL NOTE REQUESTED		
2/19	FISCAL NOTE RECEIVED		
2/20	HEARING		
2/21	COMMITTEE REPORT--BILL PASSED AS AMENDED		
2/24	2ND READING PASSED	69	28
2/24	3RD READING PASSED	82	16
2/24	REREFERRED TO APPROPRIATIONS		
3/04	HEARING		
3/04	TABLED IN COMMITTEE		

1 House BILL NO. 778
 2 INTRODUCED BY Jenkins DeMaio Peterson
 3
 4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE
 5 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ASSIST FARMERS AND RANCHERS IN
 6 DETERMINING THE MOST EFFICIENT SCHEDULING AND USE OF WATER
 7 FOR IRRIGATION PURPOSES; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE
 8 EFFECTIVE DATE."
 9

10 WHEREAS, efficient use and conservation of the state's
 11 waters is a matter of critical economic importance to the
 12 state and to Montana's agricultural producers; and

13 WHEREAS, many farmers and ranchers tend to irrigate too
 14 often and with too much water; and

15 WHEREAS, excessive application of water has numerous
 16 undesirable consequences, including leaching of fertilizers
 17 below the root zone, reduced effectiveness of herbicides and
 18 pesticides, increased risk of ground water contamination,
 19 increased erosion potential, and unnecessary energy usage
 20 and costs; and

21 WHEREAS, the Montana Cooperative Extension Service at
 22 Montana State University has an irrigation scheduling
 23 computer program that is designed to assist farmers and
 24 ranchers in determining the most efficient timing and volume
 25 of water to apply in irrigating their crops.

1
 2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

3 Section 1. Short title. [Sections 1 through 3] may be
 4 cited as the "Efficient Irrigation Practices Act of 1987".

5 Section 2. Purpose -- goal. The purpose of [this act]
 6 is to encourage and assist irrigators in making the most
 7 efficient use of their water. A goal of this effort is to
 8 maximize cooperation among the department, the cooperative
 9 extension service, the college of agriculture at Montana
 10 state university, private business, water user associations,
 11 irrigation districts, water conservancy districts, volunteer
 12 organizations, individual farmers and ranchers, and, as
 13 necessary during periods of drought, the disaster and
 14 emergency services division in the department of military
 15 affairs.

16 Section 3. Duties of the department -- irrigation
 17 efficiency assistance. The department shall:

18 (1) in conjunction with the cooperative extension
 19 service, assist farmers and ranchers in determining the most
 20 efficient timing and volume of water to apply in irrigating
 21 their crops in order to achieve optimum plant growth with
 22 the least amount of water;

23 (2) develop and distribute educational materials and
 24 create opportunities to directly inform farmers and ranchers
 25 concerning the following:

1 (a) the benefits of irrigation scheduling and
2 planning;

3 (b) the computerized irrigation scheduling service
4 available through the cooperative extension service; and

5 (c) the types of information farmers and ranchers must
6 furnish in order to use the service;

7 (3) establish a toll-free telephone line to receive
8 requests for irrigation scheduling assistance; and

9 (4) work in cooperation with state and federal
10 agencies, the college of agriculture at Montana state
11 university, private business, water user associations,
12 irrigation districts, water conservancy districts, the
13 disaster and emergency services division in the department
14 of military affairs, volunteer organizations, and interested
15 individuals to achieve the purposes of [this act].

16 Section 4. Effective date. This act is effective on
17 passage and approval.

-End-

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE
ON AGRICULTURE LIVESTOCK
& IRRIGATION

HOUSE BILL NO. 778

INTRODUCED BY JENKINS, DEMARS, PATTERSON

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT TO REQUIRE ALLOW THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO ASSIST FARMERS AND RANCHERS IN DETERMINING THE MOST EFFICIENT SCHEDULING AND USE OF WATER FOR IRRIGATION PURPOSES; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, efficient use and conservation of the state's waters is a matter of critical economic importance to the state and to Montana's agricultural producers; and

WHEREAS, many farmers and ranchers tend to irrigate too often and with too much water; and

WHEREAS, excessive application of water has numerous undesirable consequences, including leaching of fertilizers below the root zone, reduced effectiveness of herbicides and pesticides, increased risk of ground water contamination, increased erosion potential, and unnecessary energy usage and costs; and

WHEREAS, the Montana Cooperative Extension Service at Montana State University has an irrigation scheduling computer program that is designed to assist farmers and ranchers in determining the most efficient timing and volume of water to apply in irrigating their crops.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Short title. [Sections 1 through 3] may be cited as the "Efficient Irrigation Practices Act of 1987".

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Section 3. Duties of the department -- irrigation efficiency assistance. The department shall MAY:

(1) in conjunction with the cooperative extension service, assist farmers and ranchers in determining the most efficient timing and volume of water to apply in irrigating their crops in order to achieve optimum plant growth with the least amount of water;

(2) develop and distribute educational materials and create opportunities to directly inform farmers and ranchers concerning the following:



1 (a) the benefits of irrigation scheduling and
2 planning;

3 (b) the computerized irrigation scheduling service
4 available through the cooperative extension service; and

5 (c) the types of information farmers and ranchers must
6 furnish in order to use the service;

7 (3) establish a toll-free telephone line to receive
8 requests for irrigation scheduling assistance; and

9 (4) work in cooperation with state and federal
10 agencies, the college of agriculture at Montana state
11 university, private business, water user associations,
12 irrigation districts, water conservancy districts, the
13 disaster and emergency services division in the department
14 of military affairs, volunteer organizations, and interested
15 individuals to achieve the purposes of [this act].

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