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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

HOUSE FILE

543

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Passed House, Date \_\_\_\_\_ Passed Senate, Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Vote: Ayes \_\_\_\_\_ Nays \_\_\_\_\_ Vote: Ayes \_\_\_\_\_ Nays \_\_\_\_\_  
Approved \_\_\_\_\_

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to a watershed protection task force and creating  
2 a watershed protection program and a watershed protection  
3 account within the water protection fund.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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HF 543

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 161C.7 WATERSHED PROTECTION.

2 1. The department of agriculture and land stewardship  
3 shall initiate and coordinate the establishment of a watershed  
4 protection task force and provide staffing assistance to the  
5 task force. It is the intent of the general assembly that the  
6 task force include representatives of the department of  
7 agriculture and land stewardship, the department of natural  
8 resources, the emergency management division of the department  
9 of public defense, county conservation boards, soil and water  
10 conservation districts, and any other appropriate  
11 stakeholders. The task force shall study the condition of  
12 watershed protection in the state and provide recommendations  
13 to the department of agriculture and land stewardship  
14 regarding soil conservation, water quality protection, flood  
15 control, and other natural resource conservation issues. The  
16 task force shall submit recommendations to the department by  
17 January 1 of each year through January 1, 2001.

18 2. The department of agriculture and land stewardship  
19 shall implement and administer a watershed protection program.  
20 A soil and water conservation district, in cooperation with  
21 state agencies, local units of government, and private  
22 organizations, may submit an application for assistance to the  
23 department which provides a strategy for protecting soil,  
24 water quality, and other natural resources, and improving  
25 flood control in the watershed. Upon approval of an  
26 application, the department may provide a grant to the soil  
27 and water conservation district for purposes of carrying out  
28 the strategy provided in the application.

29 3. A watershed protection account is created within the  
30 water protection fund created in section 161C.4. Moneys  
31 credited to the account shall be distributed under the  
32 watershed protection program.

33 4. Administrative rules used for water quality protection  
34 projects under the water protection fund shall be used to  
35 administer the watershed protection program.

## EXPLANATION

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2 This bill provides that the department of agriculture and  
3 land stewardship shall establish a watershed protection task  
4 force consisting of all appropriate stakeholders. The bill  
5 provides that the task force shall study the condition of  
6 watershed protection in the state and make recommendations to  
7 the department by January 1 of each year through January 1,  
8 2001, regarding soil conservation, water quality protection,  
9 flood control, and other natural resource conservation issues.

10 The bill provides that the department shall implement and  
11 administer a watershed protection program to provide grants to  
12 soil and water conservation districts. In order to receive a  
13 grant under the program, a soil and water conservation  
14 district, in cooperation with state agencies, local units of  
15 government, and private organizations, must have an  
16 application approved by the department which includes a  
17 strategy to improve soil, water quality, and other natural  
18 resources, and improving flood control in the watershed. The  
19 bill provides that the moneys received under the program are  
20 to be used for purposes of carrying out the strategy set forth  
21 in the application to the department.

22 The bill creates a watershed protection account within the  
23 water protection fund. The bill provides that moneys credited  
24 to the account shall be distributed under the watershed  
25 protection program. The bill provides that the watershed  
26 protection program shall be administered by the same rules  
27 used for water quality protection projects under the water  
28 protection fund.

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