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SENATE FILE

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Passed Senate, Date _____ Passed House, 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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NAT. RES. & ENVIRONMENT

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.

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EXPLANATION

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

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

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