

AMENDED IN SENATE JANUARY 4, 2010

SENATE BILL

No. 672

Introduced by Senator Cox

February 27, 2009

An act to add Section 527.1 to the Water Code, relating to the South Tahoe Public Utilities District.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 672, as amended, Cox. South Lake Tahoe Public Utilities District: water meters.

Existing law requires an urban water supplier to install water meters on all municipal and industrial service connections located within its service area on or before January 1, 2025. Existing law requires an urban water supplier to charge each customer that has a service connection for which a meter has been installed based on the actual volume of deliveries as measured by the water meter beginning on or before January 1, 2010.

This bill, with regard to the South Tahoe Public Utilities District, would ~~extend that January 1, 2025, date to January 1, 2035, and that January 1, 2010, date to January 1, 2020~~ *authorize the district, on or before January 1, 2015, to submit to the State Water Resources Control Board and certain legislative committees a report containing specified information on the installation of water meters by the district. The bill would authorize the district, if it submits the above report, to submit, before January 1, 2020, a report updating that information. The bill would authorize the district to include in the 2nd report a request to extend the existing 2025 deadline. The bill would require the board, if it makes a certain finding, to grant an extension to the district, not to exceed 10 years.* The bill would set forth related declarations and

findings, including findings and declarations relating to the need for special legislation.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~-yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:
- 3 (a) The South Tahoe Public Utilities District currently has one
4 of the lowest per capita water usages in the State of California.
- 5 (b) The district has taken a number of steps to conserve water
6 in its service area including all of the following:
- 7 (1) The district has implemented a water conservation rebate
8 program for low-flow toilets, fixtures, dishwashers, tankless water
9 heaters, and front loading washing machines.
- 10 (2) The district has a full-time water conservation specialist on
11 staff.
- 12 (3) The district employs three full-time “water educators” during
13 the summer months to educate district water customers and enforce
14 the district’s water conservation program.
- 15 (4) The district has initiated a “turf buy-back” program that has
16 resulted, to date, in the savings of one million gallons of water
17 annually.
- 18 (c) Conserved water from the district does not flow into the
19 California watershed.
- 20 (d) Due to grading requirements established by the Tahoe
21 Regional Planning Agency, water meters may only be installed
22 from May 2 to October 14 each year. This construction window
23 is shorter than those in the rest of California and impacts the
24 district’s ability to meet the current statutory metering deadline.
- 25 (e) Meeting the current statutory deadline is cost prohibitive
26 due to a water main improvement project. The water main
27 improvement project is necessary to protect the Tahoe National
28 Forest from fire.
- 29 (f) Forest fire is a clear and present danger to the Lake Tahoe
30 Basin. The Angora Fire of 2007 damaged property and the
31 environment.
- 32 (g) Waterline retrofit is essential to forest protection and to
33 protect Lake Tahoe’s clarity.

1 (h) The district has identified over 185,000 lineal feet of
2 waterlines that cannot provide sufficient flows for fire suppression.

3 SEC. 2. Section 527.1 is added to the Water Code, to read:

4 ~~527.1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the South~~
5 ~~Tahoe Public Utilities District shall do both of the following:~~

6 ~~(a) Meet the requirements set forth in paragraph (1) of~~
7 ~~subdivision (a) of Section 527 on or before January 1, 2035.~~

8 ~~(b) Meet the requirements set forth in subparagraph (A) of~~
9 ~~paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 527 on or before January~~
10 ~~1, 2020.~~

11 *527.1. (a) On or before January 1, 2015, the South Tahoe*
12 *Public Utilities District may submit to the board, the Senate*
13 *Committee on Natural Resources and Water, and the Assembly*
14 *Committee on Water, Parks and Wildlife a report that does all of*
15 *the following:*

16 *(1) Specifies the total number of water meters that the South*
17 *Tahoe Public Utilities District would be required to install to be*
18 *in compliance with Section 527, and the total number of*
19 *connections served by the district.*

20 *(2) Specifies the total number of water meters the South Tahoe*
21 *Public Utilities District has installed before January 1, 2015, and*
22 *the number of connections that remain to be installed by January*
23 *1, 2025.*

24 *(3) Describes all funding sources used to fund the installation*
25 *of water meters in compliance with Section 527.*

26 *(4) Estimates revenue that will be available between January*
27 *1, 2015, and January 1, 2025, to fund the installation of meters*
28 *that remain to be installed during that period.*

29 *(5) Estimates the number of meters that should be installed*
30 *during each construction season to meet the January 1, 2025,*
31 *deadline imposed in Section 527, and estimates the number of*
32 *meters that can be installed based on the funding estimated in*
33 *paragraph (4).*

34 *(b) (1) If the South Tahoe Public Utilities District submits a*
35 *report in accordance with subdivision (a), the district may submit,*
36 *before January 1, 2020, a second report updating the information*
37 *described in that subdivision, to the board, the Senate Committee*
38 *on Natural Resources and Water and the Assembly Committee on*
39 *Water, Parks, and Wildlife.*

1 (2) *The South Tahoe Public Utilities District may include in the*
2 *second report a request to extend the January 1, 2025, deadline*
3 *for compliance specified in paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of*
4 *Section 527. If the board finds that the district has demonstrated*
5 *progress toward installing meters and the available resources or*
6 *the construction seasons are insufficient to allow the district to*
7 *meet the deadline, the board shall grant an extension, not to exceed*
8 *10 years.*

9 SEC. 3. The Legislature finds and declares that this act, which
10 is applicable only to the South Lake Tahoe Public Utilities District,
11 is necessary because of the unique and special water problems in
12 the area included in that district. It is, therefore, hereby declared
13 that a general law within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV
14 of the California Constitution cannot be made applicable to the
15 district and the enactment of this special law is necessary for the
16 conservation, development, control, and use of that water for the
17 public good.