

# CS/CS/HB 23: Water and Wastewater Facility Operators

## Summary:

This bill, CS/CS/HB 23, relates to water and wastewater facility operators in Florida. It amends existing laws to revise legislative findings and intent, provide definitions, and create new requirements for licensure by reciprocity. The Department of Environmental Protection is required to issue licenses for water treatment plant operators, water distribution system operators, and domestic wastewater treatment plant operators to certain applicants. The bill also allows for the issuance of temporary operator licenses during a declared state of emergency and waives the application fee for these temporary licenses.

| Cons  | Pros   |
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| 1) This bill may lead to a decrease in the quality and safety of water and wastewater services as it allows for the issuance of licenses by reciprocity, which may not guarantee that operators from other states have the same level of competency and training required in Florida. 2) The bill may also create an additional burden on the Department of Environmental Protection as they will need to review and process applications for reciprocity licenses, potentially causing delays and inefficiencies in the licensing process. 3) Waiving the application fee for temporary operator licenses during a state of emergency may result in unqualified individuals operating water and wastewater facilities, posing a risk to public health and the environment. | The bill aims to ensure that water and wastewater facility personnel are qualified to operate these facilities, protecting public health and the environment. It requires the Department of Environmental Protection to issue licenses by reciprocity to qualified applicants, promoting more efficient licensure procedures. Lastly, it authorizes the department to issue temporary licenses during a declared state of emergency, ensuring an adequate response to urgent situations. |