



# Flood control bill freed of hostile amendments

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Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie, D-Reno, agreed Sunday to rescind an amendment that threatened to kill a measure local officials need to give them the power to raise money for Washoe County's \$1.6 billion flood control project.

The measure, Senate Bill 175, was in danger of being vetoed by Gov. Jim Gibbons after Leslie added language from another vetoed bill re-

quiring regional officials to base future development on a sustainable water supply.

But Leslie agreed to drop that amendment after she secured agreements from two Washoe County commissioners and the mayors of Reno and Sparks to place the water sustainability requirements in the Truckee Meadows Regional Plan by Jan. 31.

Local officials had begun the process of amending the regional plan after Washoe County voters passed a bind-

ing ballot question requiring planning to be based on sustainable water resources.

"I think this co-exists with what we were already doing," Reno Councilman Dave Arazzi said. "This is the language we would've settled on. I don't see this as a change."

Proponents of the ballot question, however, had wanted the requirements codified into state law. But Gibbons vetoed that bill, saying it meddled in local affairs.

"It would've been nice to

see it in state law, but this is the next best thing," executive director Bob Fulkerson, of Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada that organized the campaign for the original ballot question, said.

The agreement frees SB 175, which would allow the Washoe County flood management authority to raise fees for flood-control work without a public vote and use the county credit rating for bond sales.

Officials must raise about \$400 million in local money for the \$1.6 billion Truckee River Flood Control Project.

But even with Leslie withdrawing her amendment, Reno Mayor Bob Cashell is worried Gibbons still will veto SB 175 because it creates a new governing body that could raise fees.

"He'll probably veto it," Cashell said. "He could end up killing the whole thing." With the legislative session ending today, if Gibbons vetoes the bill, the Legislature

won't be in session to override it. Gibbons already vetoed a bill to allow the Washoe County Commission to enact a voter-approved motor vehicle fuel tax increase.

Cashell said Leslie's amendment prevented the Legislature from passing SB 175 in time to be able to override it.

But Leslie said she's been assured by Washoe County officials that Gibbons would not veto the bill if her water sustainability language was no longer part of the measure.