
Natural Resources Committee

HCR 4424

Brief Description: Studying ways to improve fire fighting.

Sponsors: Representatives Sump, Armstrong, Morell, Doumit and Rockefeller.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the House Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Natural Resources, Parks and Shorelines Committee to jointly review the current procedures used to mobilize resources to fight forest fires. Requires recommendations to be reported to the Legislature by January 1, 2003.

Hearing Date: 2/6/02

Staff: Bill Lynch (786-7092).

Background:

The state devotes a large amount of resources to fight forest fires in the state. Concerns have been expressed about whether these resources are being used as efficiently as possible. Some specific areas of concern that have been identified include: the state mobilization plan does not allow private contractors to be mobilized even if they are the closest resource to a fire; there is no agreement between Washington and Oregon regarding the use of private contractors; and the need to improve training as well as the dispatch system.

Summary of Bill:

The House Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Natural Resources, Parks and Shorelines Committee must jointly review the current procedures used to mobilize resources to fight forest fires under the state mobilization plan and forest fires that remain local in nature. The committees must review recent studies that made recommendations relating to ways to improve fighting forest fires in the state. The recommendations must address ways to ensure that the closest people to a fire are called first, allowing private contractors to be mobilized under the state mobilization plan, and other efficiencies.

The committees must consult with representatives of private contractors, fire districts, municipal fire departments, the Department of Natural Resources, the State Fire Marshall,

appropriate federal agencies, and other interested groups in developing the recommendations.

Staffing for the committees is provided by the House and Senate committee staff. The committees must report their findings and recommendations to the Legislature by January 1, 2003.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.