

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 1109

As Passed House:

March 13, 2003

Title: An act relating to providing wildland fire fighting training.

Brief Description: Providing wildland fire fighting training.

Sponsors: By Representatives Clibborn, Newhouse, Benson, Wallace and Haigh.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 1/30/03, 2/6/03 [DP];

Appropriations: 2/25/03, 2/26/03 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/13/03, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Provides wildland fire fighter training.
- Requires reimbursement to fire districts and cities of at least \$3 per hour for a maximum of 200 hours of training.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Miloscia, Vice Chair; Armstrong, Ranking Minority Member; Shabro, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hunt, McDermott, Nixon, Tom and Wallace.

Staff: Anne Warwick (786-7291) and Katie Blinn (786-7114).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 23 members: Representatives Sommers, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Sehlin, Ranking Minority Member; Pearson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Alexander, Boldt, Clements, Cody, Conway, Cox, DeBolt, Dunshee, Hunter, Kagi, Kenney, Linville, McDonald, McIntire, Miloscia, Ruderman, Schual-Berke, Sump and Talcott.

Staff: Heather Flodstrom (786-7391).

Background:

The Washington State Patrol provides fire fighter training at its training academy in North Bend. Fire departments may use the training academy or acquire training services from some other source. In 1999 the Legislature amended RCW 43.43.934, Washington's fire training and education master plan, to provide a basic uniform level of training throughout Washington's fire protection districts and city fire departments. The State Fire Protection Policy Board of the Washington State Patrol was charged with developing and adopting a plan providing fire fighter one level training to all fire fighters in the state. The plan included a minimum reimbursement of \$2 for every hour of fire fighter one training received, up to 150 hours.

Summary of Engrossed Bill:

Fire fighter one training reimbursement now includes wildland fire fighting training. Fire fighter one training is to be the primary use of state reimbursement funds. Fire fighters must complete fire fighter one training before participating in wildland fire training. Reimbursement dollar amounts are increased from \$2 to \$3 per hour of instruction. The maximum reimbursed instructional hours is increased from 150 to 200.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: (State Government) Provides essential wildland training as an option for fire departments and fire protection districts throughout the state. This is not a mandatory training, but an option for those fire fighters who wish to be trained in wildland fire protection. The funding and the training would offer access to those districts and departments that would utilize wildland training skills.

Testimony For: (Appropriations) If we expand the fire fighter one training to include wildland fire fighter training, it will save money. The fire districts don't intend to come back and ask for extra funds to pay for this training, but rather they will live within the balance in the Fire Service Training Account. This training will not be provided at the academy, but rather by local fire districts and other municipalities.

Testimony Against: (State Government) None.

Testimony Against: (Appropriations) None.

Testified: (State Government) Mark Kahley, Department of Natural Resources; and Ryan Spiller, Washington Fire Commissioners Association.

Testified: (Appropriations) Ryan Spiller, Washington Fire Commissioners Association.