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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6366**

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**State of Washington**

**59th Legislature**

**2006 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Keiser, Thibaudeau and Kline)

READ FIRST TIME 02/7/06.

1       AN ACT Relating to preparation and response to pandemic influenza;  
2 and adding a new chapter to Title 70 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4       NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

5       (1) Pandemic influenza is a global outbreak of disease that occurs  
6 when a new virus appears in the human population, causes serious  
7 illness, and then spreads easily from person to person.

8       (2) Historically, pandemic influenza has occurred on average every  
9 thirty years. Most recently, the Asian flu in 1957-58 and the Hong  
10 Kong flu in 1968-69 killed seventy thousand and thirty-four thousand,  
11 respectively, in the United States.

12       (3) Another influenza pandemic could emerge with little warning,  
13 affecting a large number of people. Estimates are that another  
14 pandemic influenza would cause more than two hundred thousand deaths in  
15 our country, with as many as five thousand in Washington. Our state  
16 could also expect ten thousand to twenty-four thousand people needing  
17 hospital stays, and as many as a million people requiring outpatient  
18 visits. During a severe pandemic these numbers could be much higher.  
19 The economic losses could also be substantial.

1 (4) The current Avian or bird flu that is spreading around the  
2 world has the potential to start a pandemic. There is yet no proven  
3 vaccine, and antiviral medication supplies are limited and of unknown  
4 effectiveness against a human version of the virus, leaving traditional  
5 public health measures as the only means to slow the spread of the  
6 disease. Given the global nature of a pandemic, as much as possible,  
7 the state must be able to respond assuming only limited outside  
8 resources and assistance will be available.

9 (5) An effective response to pandemic influenza in Washington must  
10 focus at the local level and will depend on preestablished partnerships  
11 and collaborative planning on a range of best-case and worst-case  
12 scenarios. It will require flexibility and real-time decision making,  
13 guided by accurate information. It will also depend on a well-informed  
14 public that understands the dangers of pandemic influenza and the steps  
15 necessary to prevent the spread of the disease.

16 (6) Preparation for pandemic flu will also enhance the capacity of  
17 local public health jurisdictions to respond to other emergencies.

18 It is therefore the intent of the legislature that adequate  
19 pandemic flu preparedness and response plans be developed and  
20 implemented by local public health jurisdictions statewide in order to  
21 limit the number of illnesses and deaths, preserve the continuity of  
22 essential government and other community services, and minimize social  
23 disruption and economic loss in the event of an influenza pandemic.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply  
25 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

26 (1) "Department" means the department of health.

27 (2) "Local health jurisdiction" means a local health department as  
28 established under chapter 70.05 RCW, a combined city-county health  
29 department as established under chapter 70.08 RCW, or a health district  
30 established under chapter 70.05 or 70.46 RCW.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** To the extent state or federal funds are  
32 provided for this purpose, by January 1, 2007, each local health  
33 jurisdiction shall develop a pandemic flu preparedness and response  
34 plan, consistent with requirements and standards established by the  
35 department and the United States department of health and human  
36 services, for the purpose of:

1 (1) Defining preparedness activities that should be undertaken  
2 before a pandemic occurs that will enhance the effectiveness of  
3 response measures;

4 (2) Describing the response, coordination, and decision-making  
5 structure that will incorporate the local health jurisdiction, the  
6 local health care system, other local response agencies, and state and  
7 federal agencies during the pandemic;

8 (3) Defining the roles and responsibilities for the local health  
9 jurisdiction, local health care partners, and local response agencies  
10 during all phases of a pandemic;

11 (4) Describing public health interventions in a pandemic response  
12 and the timing of such interventions;

13 (5) Serving as a guide for local health care system partners,  
14 response agencies, and businesses in the development of pandemic  
15 influenza response plans; and

16 (6) Providing technical support and information on which  
17 preparedness and response actions are based.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Each jurisdiction shall develop its pandemic  
19 flu preparedness and response plan in consultation with appropriate  
20 public and private sector partners, including departments of emergency  
21 management, law enforcement, school districts, hospitals and medical  
22 professionals, tribal governments, and business organizations. At a  
23 minimum, each plan shall address:

24 (1) Strategies to educate the public about the consequences of  
25 influenza pandemic and what each person can do to prepare;

26 (2) Jurisdiction-wide disease surveillance programs, coordinated  
27 with state and federal efforts, to detect pandemic influenza strains in  
28 humans and animals;

29 (3) Mass vaccination plans and protocols to rapidly administer  
30 vaccine and monitor vaccine effectiveness and safety;

31 (4) Guidelines for the utilization of antiviral medications for the  
32 treatment and prevention of influenza;

33 (5) Implementation of nonmedical measures to decrease the spread of  
34 the disease as guided by the epidemiology of the pandemic; and

35 (6) Strategies for maintaining health care and other essential  
36 community services while limiting the spread of disease throughout the  
37 duration of the pandemic.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 5.** To the extent state or federal funds are  
2 provided for this purpose, the department shall provide technical  
3 assistance and disburse funds as needed to support local health  
4 jurisdictions in developing their pandemic flu preparedness and  
5 response plans. Upon receipt of a plan determined by the department to  
6 meet its established requirements and standards, additional funding  
7 shall be provided to a district to support the preparedness response  
8 activities identified in the plan, including but not limited to:

9            (1) Education, information, and outreach, in multiple languages, to  
10 increase community preparedness and reduce the spread of the disease  
11 should it occur;

12           (2) Development of materials and systems to be used in the event of  
13 a pandemic to keep the public informed about the influenza, the course  
14 of the pandemic, and response activities;

15           (3) Training and response drills for local health jurisdiction  
16 staff, law enforcement, health care providers, and others with  
17 responsibilities identified in the plan;

18           (4) Enhancement of the communicable disease surveillance system;  
19 and

20           (5) Development of coordination and communication systems among  
21 responding agencies.

22        Where appropriate, these activities shall be coordinated and funded  
23 on a regional or statewide basis.

24        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 6.** Sections 1 through 5 of this act constitute  
25 a new chapter in Title 70 RCW.

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