

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 3375

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Capital Budget

**Title:** An act relating to catastrophic flood relief.

**Brief Description:** Appropriating funds for catastrophic flood relief.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Alexander, Hunt, VanDeWege, DeBolt, Takko and Blake.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Capital Budget: 2/21/08, 2/22/08 [DP].

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Appropriates \$50 million in state general obligation bonds to the Office of Financial Management (OFM), working with and through other state agencies, the Chehalis Basin Flood Control Authority, and other local governments, to participate in flood hazard mitigation projects for the Chehalis River basin.
- Restricts the allotment of construction funds until an agreement between non-federal project partners has been signed and submitted to the Governor and the Legislature delineating responsibility for the ongoing operations and maintenance of the projects.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL BUDGET

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 22 members: Representatives Fromhold, Chair; Ormsby, Vice Chair; Schual-Berke, Vice Chair; McDonald, Ranking Minority Member; Newhouse, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Blake, Chase, Dunshee, Eickmeyer, Flannigan, Hankins, Hasegawa, Kelley, McCune, Orcutt, Pearson, Pedersen, Sells, Skinner, Smith and Upthegrove.

**Staff:** Susan Howson (786-7142).

**Background:**

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

In December 2007 a series of storms caused flood damage in southwest Washington. On December 8 the President declared a major disaster in the counties of Grays Harbor, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pacific and Thurston. Federal funding assistance was made available following this declaration.

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**Summary of Bill:**

The sum of \$50 million is appropriated to the Office of Financial Management (OFM), working with and through other state agencies, the Chehalis Basin Flood Control Authority, and other local governments, to participate in flood hazard mitigation projects for the Chehalis River basin.

Up to \$2.5 million of the appropriation is for the Chehalis Basin Flood Control Authority or other authorized local government groups to develop or participate in the development of flood hazard mitigation measures throughout the basin.

The OFM is directed to participate as the non-federal sponsor of the United States Army Corps of Engineers flood hazard mitigation projects for the Chehalis River basin area for projects that are mutually agreed to between the federal government, the OFM, and the Chehalis Basin Flood Control Authority, or other authorized local government groups. The OFM must prepare the necessary agreements to ensure an active partnership with federal and state agencies, local governments, the Chehalis River Flood Control Authority, and others as needed.

Construction funds may not be allotted for flood hazard mitigation projects until a project agreement between non-federal project partners has been signed and submitted to the Governor and the Legislature delineating responsibility for the ongoing operations and maintenance of the projects. The agreement must also include a plan to meet applicable flood plain management requirements and to address any applicable federal requirements for managing the effect of future land use developments on the extent and severity of flooding.

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**Appropriation:** The sum of \$50 million is appropriated to the Office of Financial Management for flood hazard mitigation projects.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The bill is critical to the successful solution of flood relief. It appropriates \$50 million that is supported by general obligation bonds. The bill includes three items that are instrumental to flood relief and protections. Homes, farms, and businesses in the entire Chehalis River basin are included in the scope. The bill establishes a partnership with local governments, the Chehalis Tribe, the state, and the federal government. The partnership will

decide on long-term solutions that do not negatively affect another area. Finally, the bill extends beyond the two year budget cycle. Flood relief and protection require a long-term solution.

The Governor saw the flood damage to people, houses, and businesses. Volunteers are still cleaning up and securing financing. A long-term effort to rebuild is necessary, but there are two immediate steps that can be taken. The state can demonstrate its commitment to the federal government to secure funding for the levy project. The original design must be updated. The entire Chehalis River basin can be considered in the plan.

An appropriation now allows for work to form a partnership based on the federal government's contribution of 75 percent of the design cost, 65 percent of the construction cost for the levy, and 50 percent of the cost for studies and project development.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Alexander, prime sponsor; Keith Phillips, Office of the Governor; and Ron Averill, Lewis County.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.