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**Public Safety Committee**

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**HB 1127**

**Brief Description:** Developing prefire mitigation plans.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Klippert, Goodman, Warnick, Kristiansen, Van De Wege and Ryu.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the Director of Fire Protection to develop a plan for prefire mitigation by adopting by rule the principles of the Ready, Set, Go! Program.
- Establishes a Wildfire Prevention Account in the custody of the State Treasurer to be used for prefire mitigation education efforts.

**Hearing Date:** 1/24/13

**Staff:** Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

**Background:**

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is a bureau, within the Washington State Patrol, and it provides various services to fire districts, government agencies, and the public. Examples of these services include: coordination of the state fire service resources for mobilization during large scale fires and disasters, fire incident reporting and data collection, fire code review and adoption, and construction plan reviews for fire sprinkler and alarm systems. The Office of the State Fire Marshal also regulates the fireworks and sprinkler industries. In addition, the Office of the State Fire Marshal provides instructional programs and high-risk fire training to fire departments and fire protection districts, hazardous materials training, and fire prevention education.

Ready, Set, Go! Program. The Ready, Set, Go! Program is a new approach to packaging existing public education programs to gain active public involvement toward reducing life and property loss and escalating costs associated with wildland fires. The tool is used by fire departments to reach out to residents in wildland urban areas to better enable them to prepare before a wildfire

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strikes. It is a collaborative process that helps in improving coordination and communication between emergency response agencies and the community.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Legislature finds that wildfire occurrence, fire intensity, and values at risk have continued to increase across the state in recent years. The Legislature intends to limit the scope of future wildfires by establishing a statewide prefire mitigation plan to be overseen by the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

The State Fire Marshal, also known as the Director of Fire Protection (Director), must develop a plan for prefire mitigation by adopting rules based on the principles of the Ready, Set, Go! Program developed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs. The rules must require coordination with local fire departments to develop individualized communitywide protection plans that include public education such as Firewise, partnership building, and personal wildfire action plans in the event of a wildfire. The Director must also work with the State Building Code Council to identify potential barriers and encourage adoption of the International Wildland Urban Interface Code.

"Firewise" means the Firewise Communities Program developed by the National Fire Protection Association, which encourages local solutions for wildfire safety by involving homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, firefighters, and others in the effort to protect people and property from wildfire risks.

A Wildfire Prevention Account (Account) is created in the custody of the State Treasurer. The Account will consist of funds from:

- all bequests, fees, gifts, emoluments, or donations;
- five percent of all money received by the state from taxes on fire insurance premiums;
- and
- interest on the investments on the Account.

Only the Director or the Director's designee may authorize expenditures from the Account and the funds may only be used for prefire mitigation efforts.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Preliminary fiscal note available.

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