

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 1389

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Addressing the scope of state fire service mobilization and ensuring compliance with existing state and federal disaster response policies.

Sponsors: Representatives Goodman, Griffey, Klippert, Van De Wege, Tarleton, Chandler, Morris, Lytton, Hayes and Moscoso.

House Committee on Public Safety
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Government Operations & Security
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

Generally, during an emergency when a local jurisdiction needs assistance beyond the capabilities of local resources and mutual agreements, a request may be made for a state mobilization.

A mobilization means that resources beyond those available through existing agreements will be requested and, when available, sent in response to an emergency or disaster situation that has exceeded the capabilities of available local resources. During a large scale emergency, mobilization includes the redistribution of regional or statewide firefighting resources to either direct emergency incident assignments or to an assignment in communities where firefighting resources are needed.

The Chief of the Washington State Patrol (WSP) has the authority to mobilize jurisdictions under the Washington State Fire Services Mobilization Plan. The purpose of the mobilization plan is to provide a mechanism and process to quickly notify, assemble, and deploy fire service personnel and equipment to any local fire jurisdiction in Washington that has expended or will expend all available local and mutual aid resources in attempting to manage fires, disasters, or other events that jeopardize the ability of a jurisdiction to provide for the protection of life and property. The State Fire Marshal in the WSP serves as the state fire resources coordinator when a state mobilization plan is mobilized.

State fire mobilization plans are generally needed:

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- because of the possibility of the occurrence of disastrous fires or other disasters of unprecedented size and destructiveness;
- to insure that the state is adequately prepared to respond to a fire or disaster;
- to provide for redistribution of personnel, equipment, and other logistical resources from around the state when a wild land fire or other emergency exceeds the firefighting capacity of local jurisdictions;
- to establish a mechanism and a procedure to provide for reimbursement to state agencies and local agencies that respond to help others in time of need or to a host fire district that experiences expenses beyond its allocated available resources in that district; and
- to protect the public peace, health, safety, lives, and property of the people of Washington.

The WSP in consultation with the Office of Financial Management and the Washington Military Department is responsible for developing procedures to facilitate reimbursement to state agencies and local jurisdictions from appropriate federal and state funds when state agencies and jurisdictions are mobilized by the Chief of the WSP under the Washington Fire Services Mobilization plan.

When a mobilization is declared by the Chief of the WSP, all firefighting resources, including those of the host fire protection authorities, are deemed mobilized. Beginning from the time the mobilization is declared, all non-host fire protection authorities providing firefighting resources in response to a mobilization declaration are eligible for expense reimbursement. All state and local agencies that participate in a fire service mobilization generally receive reimbursement through the state's Disaster Response Account (Account).

The Account is a dedicated account in the State Treasury. Money may be placed in the Account from legislative appropriations and transfers, federal appropriations, and other lawful sources. Expenditures from the Account are used to support state agency and local government disaster response and recovery efforts. There have been 156 mobilization events since the inception of the Washington Fire Services Mobilization Plan in 1994: 154 of the events were fire-related and two of the events were non-fire events (the 1999 World Trade Organization riots and the 2008 Rosalia Motorcycle Rally).

Summary:

The Legislature recognizes the role that fire service personnel play in responding to fires as well as other various types of disasters. It is the intent of the Legislature that state fire service mobilizations be allowed in all incidents to which fire service personnel typically respond, so long as the mobilizations meet the requirements identified in the Washington State Fire Service Mobilization Plan. It is the intent of the Legislature to review the use of fire mobilizations for emergencies and disasters other than fire suppression to determine if this policy should continue or be modified.

The term "mobilization" is redefined to mean that all risk resources regularly provided by fire departments, fire districts, and regional fire protection service authorities beyond those available through existing agreements will be requested and, when available, sent in response to an emergency or disaster situation that has exceeded the capabilities of available local

resources. During a large scale emergency, mobilization includes the redistribution of regional or statewide risk resources to either direct emergency incident assignments or to assignments in communities where resources are needed. Fire department resources may not be mobilized to assist law enforcement with police activities during a civil protest or demonstration. However, fire departments, fire districts, and regional fire protection service authorities may provide medical care or aid and firefighting when mobilized for any purpose.

"All risk resources" means those resources regularly provided by fire departments, fire districts, and regional fire protection service authorities required to respond to natural or man-made incidents, including but not limited to, wild land fires, landslides, earthquakes, floods, and contagious diseases.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	98	0	
Senate	49	0	(Senate amended)
House	97	1	(House concurred)

Effective: July 24, 2015