

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1389

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Security, March 24, 2015

Title: An act relating to the scope of state fire service mobilization and ensuring compliance with existing state and federal disaster response policies.

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.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/10/15, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Security: 3/23/15, 3/24/15 [DPA-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Pearson, Vice Chair; Liias, Ranking Minority Member; Dangel, Habib and McCoy.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: The state Fire Service Resource Mobilization Plan (mobilization plan) can be implemented to provide resources from around the state when a wildland fire exceeds firefighting capacity of local jurisdictions. Nonhost fire protection authorities are eligible for reimbursement of expenses when mobilized under the mobilization plan. There have been 156 mobilization events since the inception of the mobilization plan in 1994. Of the events, 154 were fire-related; two of the events were non-fire events, the 1999 World Trade Organization riots and the 2008 Rosalia Motorcycle Rally.

In July 2014, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee and Snohomish County Executive John Lovick appointed a joint commission in response to the SR 530 Landslide. The SR 530 Landslide Commission (Commission) was tasked with reviewing the landslide and the collective response to it, including the initial emergency search and rescue, community efforts, incident management, and coordination among local, county, state, tribal, and federal governments. Among the Commission's recommendations was that the Legislature clarify the definition of all-hazards mobilization under the mobilization plan.

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.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Amendments): Mobilization plan provisions are revised to authorize mobilization of risk resources regularly provided by fire departments, fire districts, and regional fire protection authorities in response to natural and man-made incidents, including but not limited to wildland fires, landslides, earthquakes, floods, and contagious diseases. Nonhost fire protection authorities are eligible for reimbursement of expenses if a mobilization meets requirements identified in the mobilization plan.

Fire resources may not be mobilized to assist with police activities during a civil protest or demonstration. Fire agencies are not restricted from providing medical care or firefighting when mobilized for any purpose.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments): Fire resources may not be mobilized to assist with police activities during a civil protest or demonstration. Fire agencies are not restricted from providing medical care or firefighting when mobilized for any purpose.

Both natural and man-made incidents are eligible for mobilization under the mobilization plan.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on House Bill: PRO: If this bill passed last year, the response to and recovery from the Oso mudslide would have been quicker and resources could have been mobilized sooner. State law to reflect what is in the fire mobilization plan, and fire resources should be mobilized for more than just fires. The fire mobilization plan was written under the presumption that it was an all-risk plan. We've recently witnessed the need for all-risk resources to be mobilized, even if it's infrequent. This will solidify the fire service's ability to respond anywhere in the state when called on to serve.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Goodman, prime sponsor; Dave LaFave, Cowlitz 2 Fire and Rescue.

Persons Signed in to Testify But Not Testifying: PRO: Dylan Doty, WA Fire Chiefs Assn.