
HOUSE BILL 2320

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

By Representatives Reeves, Stanford, Bergquist, Tarleton, Slatter, Shea, Barkis, Senn, and Ryu; by request of Insurance Commissioner

Prefiled 12/22/17. Read first time 01/08/18. Referred to Committee on Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs.

1 AN ACT Relating to the creation of a work group to study and make
2 recommendations on natural disaster mitigation and resiliency
3 activities; and adding new sections to chapter 48.02 RCW.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 48.02
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 Residents of this state have been impacted by natural disasters
8 such as floods, landslides, wildfires, and earthquakes and continue
9 to be at risk from these and other natural disasters. In 2016,
10 insured losses from natural disasters in the United States totaled
11 almost twenty-four billion dollars. In 2015, this state's wildfire
12 season was the largest in Washington state history, burning more than
13 one million acres and costing more than two hundred fifty-three
14 million dollars. In 2016, almost two hundred ninety-four thousand
15 acres burned in Washington state and there were more than four
16 hundred thirty national flood insurance program (nfip) claims filed,
17 totaling over seven million dollars. It is critical that more be done
18 to better prepare this state for disasters and to put in place
19 strategies to mitigate the impacts of the disasters. To address this
20 critical need, the legislature is creating a work group that will
21 review disaster mitigation and preparation projects in other states

1 and those currently being done in this state and make recommendations
2 for how this state's efforts to mitigate the impacts of natural
3 disasters can be expanded and coordinated and whether or not an
4 ongoing disaster resiliency program should be created.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 48.02
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 A working group to study and make recommendations on natural
8 disaster and resiliency activities is hereby created. The working
9 group membership shall be composed of:

10 (1) The insurance commissioner or his or her designee, who shall
11 be the chair of the working group;

12 (2) One member from each of the four major caucuses of the
13 legislature;

14 (3) A representative from the governor's resilient Washington
15 work group;

16 (4) A representative from the Washington state association of
17 counties;

18 (5) A representative from the association of Washington cities;

19 (6) A representative from the state building code council;

20 (7) The supervisor of the department of natural resources or his
21 or her designee;

22 (8) The director of the Washington state military department or
23 his or her designee; and

24 (9) A representative from the property and casualty insurance
25 industry.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 48.02
27 RCW to read as follows:

28 (1) The working group will engage in the following activities:

29 (a) Review disaster mitigation and resiliency activities being
30 done in this state by public and private entities;

31 (b) Review disaster mitigation and resiliency activities being
32 done in other states and at the federal level;

33 (c) Review information on uptake in this state for disaster-
34 related insurance, such as flood and earthquake;

35 (d) Review information on how other states are coordinating
36 disaster mitigation and resiliency work and the work of entities such
37 as the California earthquake authority;

1 (e) Make recommendations to the legislature and the office of the
2 insurance commissioner on:
3 (i) Whether this state should create an ongoing disaster
4 resiliency program;
5 (ii) What activities the program should engage in;
6 (iii) How the program should coordinate with state agencies and
7 other entities engaged in disaster mitigation and resiliency work;
8 (iv) Where the program should be housed; and
9 (v) How the program should be funded.
10 (2) The working group shall meet during the 2018 interim and make
11 their recommendations to the legislature by December 1, 2018.

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