
**Housing, Community Development &
Veterans Committee**

HB 2143

Brief Description: Implementing an emergency alert system.

Sponsors: Representatives Mosbrucker and Pettigrew.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Military Department to contract with a vendor to include, as part of the Enhanced 911 emergency alert system, the ability to immediately display that a person with a disability may be present at the scene of an emergency.

Hearing Date: 3/19/19

Staff: Serena Dolly (786-7150).

Background:

Washington Military Department and Enhanced 911.

The phone number 911 is the national emergency phone number in the United States. The Enhanced 911 (E911) system is the result of a 1991 voter referendum directing E911 emergency communications systems to be available statewide. The office coordinating the E911 system is located within the Emergency Management Division of the Washington Military Department (MIL).

The Adjutant General, commander of all Washington Army and Air National Guard forces, is the Director of the MIL. The E911 Advisory Committee, established in 2010, assists the state E911 coordinator in facilitating the operation of E911. Its members are appointed by the Adjutant General and include individuals from the Washington State Association of Fire Chiefs, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, and the Washington State Patrol, among others.

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.

Travis Alert Act.

The Travis Alert Act was enacted in 2017 and required the Adjutant General, in collaboration with other entities, to assess:

- the resources necessary to immediately display via the E911 system that a person with a disability may be present at the scene of an emergency, the caller's identification, location, phone number, address, and additional information if made available;
- how to best acquire, implement, and safeguard a secure website and the information provided regarding a person with a disability;
- the information that must remain confidential under law, and how to best ensure this; and
- the need to provide immunity to various agencies, first responders, and emergency personnel.

The MIL issued a report with its assessment in November 2018. The assessment found that collecting and displaying disability information as part of the E911 system may be feasible but requires additional legislation to:

- determine whether an existing commercial product should be purchased or developed over time and deployed on a county by county basis;
- determine whether the state or local governments should deploy the technology; and
- protect confidential information about a person with a disability.

Summary of Bill:

The MIL must contract with a vendor to include, as part of the E911 system, the ability to immediately display that a person with a disability may be present at the scene of an emergency. The display must identify the caller and provide the location, phone number, address, and if made available, additional information on the person with a disability that would assist the first responder.

The MIL must:

- submit a request for proposal;
- select a vendor that ensures the system is encrypted and able to collect, protect, and display the information only when needed to first responders; and
- report the actual implementation and maintenance costs of vendor contracts to the Governor and appropriate legislative committees by December 1, 2019.

The selected vendor must:

- ensure the information in the system is provided voluntarily by the person with a disability or the person's caretaker;
- not use the information for commercial purposes; and
- keep the data confidential.

The sum of \$1.5 million, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for state fiscal year 2020 for implementation by the MIL.

All information provided by a person with a disability or the person's caretaker for the purposes of the alert system is exempt from public disclosure.

Appropriation: The sum of \$1.5 million.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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