

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5106

As Reported by House Committee On:
Housing, Community Development & Veterans

Title: An act relating to the creation of a work group to study and make recommendations on natural disaster mitigation and resiliency activities.

Brief Description: Concerning the creation of a work group to study and make recommendations on natural disaster mitigation and resiliency activities.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Financial Institutions, Economic Development & Trade (originally sponsored by Senators Das, Mullet, Frockt, Keiser, Zeiger and Kuderer; by request of Insurance Commissioner).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Housing, Community Development & Veterans: 3/19/19, 3/26/19 [DPA].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill
(As Amended by Committee)**

- Creates a work group to review disaster mitigation and resiliency activities in Washington, other states, and at the federal level.
- Directs the work group to submit a final report with recommendations by December 1, 2020, on whether Washington should create an ongoing disaster resiliency program and what activities the program should engage in.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & VETERANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Ryu, Chair; Morgan, Vice Chair; Jenkin, Ranking Minority Member; Gildon, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Barkis, Entenman, Frame, Leavitt and Reeves.

Staff: Serena Dolly (786-7150).

Background:

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.

Many states, including Washington, have embarked on efforts to mitigate loss from future disasters, including earthquakes, floods, and fires. For instance, in 2012, Washington's Emergency Management Council's Seismic Safety Committee issued a report and recommendations on improving statewide recovery after an earthquake. In 2016 the Governor created the Resilient Washington Subcabinet to help the state better prepare for natural disasters. Other states have created public entities, such as the California Earthquake Authority, to assist in the recovery process following a natural disaster.

Summary of Amended Bill:

A work group is created to study disaster mitigation and resiliency activities being implemented by federal agencies, other states, and public and private entities in Washington. In addition, the work group must review information on the use of disaster-related insurance, how other states are coordinating disaster mitigation and resiliency work, and the work of entities such as the California Earthquake Authority.

The work group will consist of 27 members, comprised of the following:

- the Insurance Commissioner, or a designee, as the chair of the work group;
- one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the House of Representatives;
- one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the Senate;
- a representative from the Governor's Resilient Washington work group;
- a representative from the Washington State Association of Counties;
- a representative from the Association of Washington Cities;
- a representative from the State Building Code Council;
- the Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources or a designee;
- the Director of the Washington State Military Department or a designee;
- the Superintendent of Public Instruction or a designee;
- the Secretary of the state Department of Transportation or a designee;
- the Director of the Department of Ecology or a designee;
- the Director of the Department of Commerce or a designee;
- a representative from the Washington Association of Building Officials;
- a representative from the Building Industry Association of Washington;
- two representatives from the property and casualty insurance industry;
- a representative of emergency and transitional housing providers;
- a representative from public utility districts;
- a representative of water and sewer districts;
- a representative selected by the Washington State Commission on African American Affairs, the Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs, the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, and the Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs;
- a representative of the state Department of Agriculture;
- a representative of the Washington State Conservation Commission; and
- two representatives of federally recognized Indian tribes.

The work group may add other participants for specific topic discussions or subcommittees.

The work group must submit a preliminary report of recommendations by November 1, 2019, and a final report by December 1, 2020. The report must include recommendations on:

- whether Washington should create an ongoing disaster resiliency program;
- the activities the program should engage in;
- how the program should coordinate with state agencies and other entities; and
- how the program should be funded.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

The amended bill included six additional members in the work group: the Secretary of the state Department of Transportation or his or her designee; a representative from the Building Industry Association of Washington; a representative of emergency and transitional housing providers; a representative of water and sewer districts; and two representatives of federally recognized Indian tribes. The amended bill also specified that the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate appoint the legislative members to the work group.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Washington is prone to natural disasters, such as earthquakes and fires. This is a common sense bill to ensure the state is prepared and can recover. It would complement the work done by the Governor's Resilient Washington Subcabinet. The work group should include a representative from one of the more than 200 water and sewer districts in the state. These districts have extensive involvement in emergency management issues and could provide expertise to the work group.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Das, prime sponsor; Robert Ezelle, Washington State Military Department; Jean Leonard, Washington Insurers, State Farm, and the National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies; Mel Sorensen, American Property Casualty Insurance Association and American Family Insurance; Lonnie Johns-Brown, Office of the Insurance Commissioner; Joe Daniels, Washington Association of Water/Sewer Districts; and Jessica Czajkowski, Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.