

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5247

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

Title: An act relating to addressing catastrophic incidents that are natural or human-caused emergencies.

Brief Description: Addressing catastrophic incidents that are natural or human-caused emergencies.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Frockt, Zeiger, Hobbs, Bailey, Rolfes, Hunt, Conway, Das, Honeyford, Keiser and Mullet; by request of Military Department).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Housing, Community Development & Veterans: 3/27/19 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill
(As Amended by Committee)

- Adds a catastrophic incident emergency response plan to the required plans the Adjutant General must develop for the state.
- Requires the Adjutant General, in consultation with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, to develop guidance for catastrophic incident plans for local schools, subject to appropriation.

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.

The Washington State Military Department (Military Department), under the direction of the Adjutant General, administers the state's comprehensive program of emergency management. The Adjutant General is responsible for developing a comprehensive, all-hazard emergency plan for the state, known as the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, that includes an analysis of natural, technological, or human-caused hazards and procedures to coordinate state and local resources in responding to such hazards.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The Adjutant General must develop:

- a catastrophic incident emergency response plan in addition to a comprehensive all-hazard emergency plan; and
- guidance, in consultation with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, that may be used by local school districts in developing, maintaining, training, and exercising catastrophic incident plans, subject to appropriation.

"Catastrophic incident" is defined as any natural or human-caused incident, including terrorism and enemy attack, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage, or disruption severely affecting the population, infrastructure, environment, economy, or government functions. Catastrophic incident does not include an event resulting from individuals exercising their First Amendment rights of freedom of speech and of the people to peaceably assemble.

Amended Bill Compared to Substitute Bill:

The striking amendment removes provisions to create a Functional Recovery Task Force and the definitions of "functional recovery standard" and "emergency services building."

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) This bill provides a mechanism for the Military Department to develop catastrophic incident emergency response plans. Washington is one of the most hazard-prone areas of the country. The bill provides a statutory framework for the Military Department to work with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and local schools. Ensuring the safety of public school children is a priority for the state. This represents a very modest investment with significant returns.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Frockt, prime sponsor; and Robert Ezelle, Washington State Military Department.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.