

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1484

As Reported by House Committee On:

Education
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to the statewide first responder building mapping information system.

Brief Description: Concerning the statewide first responder building mapping information system.

Sponsors: Representatives Dolan and Lekanoff.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/9/21, 2/15/21 [DPS];
Appropriations: 2/18/21, 2/19/21 [DPS(ED)].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Repeals provisions directing the operation and use of the first responder building mapping information system for schools and other public buildings (mapping system).
- Removes references to the mapping system in safe school plan requirements.
- Directs transfer of the mapping system information to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Governor, and other public entities upon request.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Ybarra, Ranking Minority Member; Berg, Bergquist, Callan, Ortiz-Self, Rude, Steele and Stonier.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McEntire.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative McCaslin.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Mapping System Creation, Operation, and Use. In 2003 the Legislature directed the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) to create a statewide first responder building mapping information system for schools and other public buildings (mapping system). The system is known as the Critical Incident Planning and Mapping System, or Rapid Responder. The mapping system is intended to provide information to emergency response agencies for natural disasters, criminal acts, and other incidents. The mapping system includes floor plans, contact information, utilities, hazards, and other information about schools and other public buildings. All emergency response agencies can access the mapping system for free.

School districts are not required to update information or map new schools unless funding is available. For the last six fiscal years, state funding has covered only the operational costs of the mapping system.

Safe School Plans. School districts must adopt and implement "safe school plans" that include procedures for disaster prevention, intervention, all hazard/crisis response, and post-crisis recovery. The plans are required to be consistent with the mapping system. The mapping system must be used in one safety-related drill conducted by schools each year. To the extent funds are available, school districts must annually review and update these plans, which includes updates to the mapping system and reports to the WASPC.

Review of the Mapping System. Legislation enacted in 2019 directed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) to review how school districts and emergency response agencies use the mapping system. The study included a review of system data and surveys of school districts and law enforcement agencies. In January 2020 the JLARC issued a report of its findings and recommendations. The report includes information on the number of school districts that use other technologies for building mapping, mapping and operations costs, the varied uses of the mapping system, and identified advantages and limitations of the mapping system. The JLARC made two recommendations in the report: (1) the WASPC should develop and implement detailed training and outreach strategies that have measurable goals and targets; and (2) the WASPC should periodically review technology standards, address user feedback about technology issues, and use system data to inform its program management decisions.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Mapping System Operation and Use. Statutes directing the operation of the mapping system by the WASPC and use of the mapping system by schools and other public buildings are repealed.

Safe School Plans. Implementation of safe school plans no longer requires: (1) consistency with the mapping system; (2) annual updates of the mapping system; (3) reports to the WASPC; nor (4) use of the mapping system in schools' safety-related drills.

Mapping System Information Transfer. No later than 90 days after July 1, 2021, the WASPC must: (1) coordinate with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to transfer all information in the mapping system related to public schools to the OSPI; and (2) notify all public entities that are not public schools that the mapping system has been terminated as of July 1, 2021. For any public entity that is not a public school that requests its data from the mapping system prior to December 31, 2021, the WASPC must coordinate a timely and efficient transfer of that entity's data to that entity. No later than December 31, 2021, the WASPC must provide the Governor, or the Governor's designee, all data related to any facility owned by any public entity in the mapping system. The WASPC is not required to provide any data or information regarding tactical or intelligence information to any person or entity that is not a Washington law enforcement agency.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill changes the term "man-made disaster" to "human-induced disaster." It also adds an emergency clause to make the bill effective July 1, 2021.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 2021.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The mapping program was created in 2003 as part of the response to the Columbine shooting, and for a long time it was the only tool available. It was valuable, but new tools have been developed that are more comprehensive and more available. In addition, there are regional school safety centers in each educational service district and other tools like threat assessment training and mental health counseling for students in need.

Law enforcement response to active shooters is different now than it was then. Then, law enforcement would look at floor plans and move in as one unit, which caused a delay in response. Now, the first law enforcement officer to arrive at the scene moves in and other law enforcement officers follow that officer in. The state has attempted to administer the mapping system with thousands of sites and thousands of uses with 1.5 full time equivalent staff. State funding has not been provided to map newly constructed or remodeled schools since 2015.

Subsequent to the JLARC study and report, which showed very low regular use by school districts and even less regular use by first response agencies, the Student Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee set up a work group to figure out next steps for the mapping system. The work group concluded that the mapping system had run its useful course. It recommended that the state target school safety resources and requirements to those that are more relevant to current school safety needs.

This bill eliminates the state building mapping system. The bill sets up a method to retrieve current data from the mapping system so that it is not lost. School districts and first response agencies can continue to use the mapping system directly through the provider, rather than through the state. It is hoped that this bill will save state resources that can be put into the regional school safety centers, which need one more staff member. The state's investment is not worth the effort.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Dolan, prime sponsor; Martin Mueller, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; James McMahan, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs; and Bud Sizemore, Washington State Council of Fire Fighters.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Education be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 33 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; Chambers, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Boehnke, Caldier, Chandler, Chopp, Cody, Dolan, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Frame, Hansen, Harris, Hoff, Jacobsen, Johnson, J., Lekanoff, Pollet, Rude, Ryu, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Steele, Stonier, Sullivan and Tharinger.

Staff: Jordan Clarke (786-7123).

Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Appropriations Compared to

Recommendation of Committee On Education:

No new changes were recommended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on July 1, 2021.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The system was designed to assist law enforcement response to potential active shooters, but the tactics used by law enforcement are now fundamentally different than they were in 2003. The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs has also struggled to administer the statewide program, with thousands of sites and users, with only one person to staff the program. In addition, it has been difficult to update the system with decreased funding.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Dolan, prime sponsor; and James McMahan, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.