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**Community & Economic Development  
Committee**

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**SSB 5555**

**Brief Description:** Concerning public safety telecommunicators.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on State Government & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Van De Wege, Hunt, Mullet and Randall).

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Establishes a Certification Board in the state's Enhanced 911 Coordination Office to create a certification and training program for public safety telecommunicators.

**Hearing Date:** 2/16/22

**Staff:** Emily Poole (786-7106).

**Background:**

Emergency Management Act.

The state's Emergency Management Act establishes a comprehensive program of emergency management in the state, which is administered by the Military Department under the direction of the state's Adjutant General. As part of the emergency management program, the Adjutant General, through the state Enhanced 911 (E-911) Coordinator, must coordinate and facilitate implementation and operation of a statewide E-911 emergency communications network. E-911 is a service that automatically displays the telephone number and physical location of a 911 caller.

E-911 Coordination Office.

The E-911 Coordinator is the head of the E-911 Coordination Office (Coordination Office),

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which is established in the Emergency Management Division of the Military Department. Duties of the Coordination Office include:

- coordinating and facilitating the implementation and operation of E-911 emergency communications systems throughout the state;
- seeking advice and assistance from, and providing staff support for the E-911 Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee);
- recommending to the Utilities and Transportation Commission the level of the state E-911 excise tax for the following year;
- specifying rules defining the purposes for which available state E-911 funding may be expended; and
- providing an annual update to the Advisory Committee on how much money each county has spent on efforts to modernize their existing E-911 emergency communications system and E-911 operational costs.

#### E-911 Advisory Committee.

The Advisory Committee advises and assists the E-911 Coordinator in coordinating and facilitating the implementation and operation of E-911 throughout the state. The Advisory Committee members represent diverse geographical areas of the state and include a variety of public safety professionals, state and local government officials, and telecommunications providers.

#### E-911 Account.

All receipts from the state E-911 excise taxes must be deposited into the E-911 Account (911 Account). Moneys in the account may only be used for certain purposes, including to support the statewide coordination and management of the E-911 system, for the implementation of wireless E-911 statewide, for the modernization of E-911 emergency communications systems statewide, and to help supplement, within available funds, the operational costs of the system.

#### Public Safety Answering Points.

Washington has Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) that cover all counties within the state. Each primary PSAP is connected to the statewide network, which delivers location information of the 911 caller as well as other data needed. The Coordination Office, in collaboration with the Advisory Committee, offers training to public safety telecommunicators working in PSAPs through the 911 Telecommunicator Training Program.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

A Certification Board (Board) is established in the E-911 Coordination Office (Coordination Office) to create a certification and training program for public safety telecommunicators throughout the state.

The duties of the Board include:

- adopting bylaws;
- adopting rules, with the advice and assistance of the E-911 Advisory Committee (Advisory

- Committee), including rules to implement a state-approved training program;
- reviewing and approving state-approved training programs biennially;
- setting all public safety telecommunicator certification, registration, and renewal fees, and collecting and depositing all fees in the E-911 Account (911 Account); and
- establishing recertification requirements.

The Board must represent diverse stakeholders of the 911 system. The Board must consist of the following volunteer members:

- the chair or vice chair of the Advisory Committee;
- two Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) directors or 911 coordinators;
- two public safety telecommunicators from a PSAP;
- two labor union representatives from labor unions representing public safety telecommunicators;
- one representative appointed by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs;
- one representative appointed by the Washington State Fire Chiefs Association; and
- one representative from the Washington State Association of Counties.

The Coordination Office is required to provide staff support and assistance to the Board, including but not limited to:

- establishing necessary forms and procedures;
- issuing a public safety telecommunicator registration and certification to any applicant who has met certain requirements; and
- maintaining official records for the state Military Department of all applicants and persons with registrations and certificates for public safety telecommunicator certification.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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