

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5555

As of January 19, 2022

Title: An act relating to public safety telecommunicators.

Brief Description: Concerning public safety telecommunicators.

Sponsors: Senators Van De Wege, Hunt, Mullet and Randall.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: State Government & Elections: 1/21/22.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a Certification Board (Board) in the state Enhanced 911 Coordination Office (Office) to create a certification and training program for public safety telecommunicators throughout the state.
- Requires the Office to provide staff support and assistance to the Board.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

Staff: Melissa Van Gorkom (786-7491)

Background: People call 911 to get help in the event of an emergency requiring law enforcement, fire, or medical services. A 911 call is routed over dedicated networks to the appropriate 911 Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). Enhanced 911 (E911) allows the caller's phone number and location to be automatically displayed at the PSAP.

Enhanced 911 Coordinating Office. The E911 Coordination Office (Office) is part of the Emergency Management Division of the Military Department. Duties of the office include:

- coordinating and facilitating the implementation and operation of E911 emergency communications systems throughout the state;
- seeking advice and assistance from, and providing staff support for, the E911

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- Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee);
- recommending to the Utilities and Transportation Commission the level of the state E-911 excise tax for the following year;
 - considering base needs of individual counties for specific assistance;
 - specifying rules defining the purposes for which available state E911 funding may be expended with the advice and assistance of the Advisory Committee; and
 - providing an annual update to the Advisory Committee on how much money each county has spent on efforts to modernize their existing E911 emergency communications system and E911 operational costs.

Enhanced 911 Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee advises and assists the E911 Coordinator in coordinating and facilitating the implementation and operation of E911 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.

Summary of Bill: Enhanced 911 Coordinating Office. A Certification Board (Board) of ten members is established in the Office to create a certification and training program for Public Safety Telecommunicators (Telecommunicators) throughout the state. The Office must provide staff support and assistance to the Board, including but not limited to:

- establishing forms and procedures;
- issuing telecommunicator registration and certifications; and
- maintaining official records for the state Military Department of all applicants and persons with registrations and certificates for telecommunicator certification.

Board Duties. The Board has authority to:

- adopt bylaws;
- adopt rules, with the advice and assistance of the Advisory Committee—rulemaking authority includes, but is not limited to, adopting rules to implement a state-approved training program for process, policy, and procedure;
- review and approve state-approved training programs biennially;
- set all telecommunicators certification, registration, and renewal fees, and collect and deposit all fees in the E911 Account; and
- establish recertification requirements.

Board Membership. The Board must represent diverse stakeholders of the 911 system. The Board membership consists of:

- the chair or vice chair of the Advisory Committee;
- two PSAP directors or 911 coordinators and two telecommunicators appointed by the Advisory Committee, one from the east side and one from the west side of the Cascade mountains for each;
- two labor union representatives from labor unions representing 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.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 10, 2022.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.