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**HOUSE BILL 1340**

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**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2021 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Lovick, Harris, Fitzgibbon, Ryu, Taylor, Wicks, Dolan, Ramel, Valdez, Leavitt, Goodman, J. Johnson, Chopp, Orwall, Santos, Peterson, Gregerson, Shewmake, Davis, Ormsby, Berg, Bronoske, Duerr, Fey, Bateman, Lekanoff, Senn, Callan, Frame, Pollet, Harris-Talley, and Macri

Read first time 01/21/21. Referred to Committee on Community & Economic Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to the creation of the statewide pandemic  
2 preparation and response task force; adding a new section to chapter  
3 38.52 RCW; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that in 2020,  
6 the world faced an enormous challenge in responding to the novel  
7 coronavirus pandemic. Washington was no exception, having been the  
8 site of the first confirmed coronavirus infection in the United  
9 States.

10 (2) The legislature further finds that Washington's response to  
11 the pandemic was one of the best in the nation; however, the state  
12 should continue on the path of refining its response mechanisms and  
13 devising new strategies for preparing for future outbreaks.

14 (3) The legislature further finds that this important work is  
15 critical to public health and safety.

16 (4) The legislature further finds that a task force of  
17 professionals from across the spectrum of affected stakeholders  
18 should be assembled to continue this work. The knowledge and  
19 experience of each field will be necessary for an effective study of  
20 Washington's response to the novel coronavirus pandemic and the  
21 creation of future response plans.

1 (5) The legislature intends that the scope of the task force's  
2 authority be interpreted broadly to allow for the most complete  
3 analysis of pandemic preparation and response options.

4 (6) The legislature further intends that the report produced by  
5 the task force be informative and comprehensive and include  
6 recommendations for future pandemic preparation and response by all  
7 levels of government in Washington.

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) A task force on statewide pandemic  
9 preparation and response is established. The task force is composed  
10 of the following members:

11 (a) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the  
12 senate, appointed by the president of the senate;

13 (b) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house  
14 of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of  
15 representatives;

16 (c) The secretary of the department of health, or the secretary's  
17 designee;

18 (d) The adjutant general of the military department, or the  
19 adjutant general's designee;

20 (e) The commissioner of the employment security department, or  
21 the commissioner's designee;

22 (f) The director of the department of financial institutions, or  
23 the director's designee;

24 (g) The insurance commissioner, or the commissioner's designee;

25 (h) The secretary of the department of social and health  
26 services, or the secretary's designee;

27 (i) The superintendent of public instruction, or the  
28 superintendent's designee;

29 (j) The director of the department of labor and industries, or  
30 the director's designee;

31 (k) The executive director of the pharmacy quality assurance  
32 commission, or the executive director's designee;

33 (l) One member representing the Washington association of  
34 sheriffs and police chiefs; and

35 (m) One member representing each of the following, to be  
36 appointed by the governor:

37 (i) The office of the governor;

38 (ii) The association of Washington cities;

39 (iii) The Washington state association of counties;

- 1 (iv) Emergency and transitional housing providers;
- 2 (v) A statewide association representing physicians;
- 3 (vi) A statewide association representing nurses;
- 4 (vii) A statewide association representing hospitals;
- 5 (viii) Local public health officials; and
- 6 (ix) Local emergency management agencies.

7 (2) The adjutant general, or the adjutant general's designee, and  
8 the secretary of the department of health, or the secretary's  
9 designee, shall cochair the task force and convene its initial  
10 meeting.

11 (3)(a) The task force shall study and make recommendations  
12 regarding the following issues:

13 (i) Developing strategies to facilitate a coordinated response by  
14 the health system prior to and during a pandemic;

15 (ii) Establishing protections for the business community and  
16 workers during a pandemic, including automating systems for extending  
17 expiring licenses, suspending nonessential deliveries, developing  
18 protections for farm workers, distributing small business loans,  
19 establishing methods for screening people with fevers before entering  
20 public places such as public transportation, public offices, and  
21 markets, and implementing hazard pay for medical professionals and  
22 stipends for unemployed and furloughed workers;

23 (iii) Implementing standards regarding flexible rent and  
24 repayment plans for residential and commercial tenants during a  
25 pandemic;

26 (iv) Establishing a multidisciplinary team of experts  
27 representing public health, emergency management, public safety,  
28 business community, social service providers, first responders,  
29 medical professionals, educators, and state and local officials to  
30 manage a coordinated and comprehensive statewide response to future  
31 pandemics;

32 (v) Implementing additional emergency preparedness strategies  
33 which may include, but are not limited to:

34 (A) Establishing regional emergency management agencies;

35 (B) Creating a volunteer reserve disaster corps of individuals  
36 trained to assist with a pandemic response by performing tasks such  
37 as fever checking, contact tracing, hospital construction, food  
38 delivery, child care, basic nursing, lab technician work, or hospital  
39 decontamination;

1 (C) Devising tools to measure the scale of the impact caused by a  
2 pandemic and tailoring the pandemic response to affected regions  
3 based on the scale of the impact in those regions;

4 (D) Integrating and synthesizing existing local and regional  
5 pandemic response plans and condensing such plans into a statewide  
6 pandemic response master plan that incorporates lessons learned from  
7 the novel coronavirus pandemic; and

8 (E) Implementing policies adopted in other states that would  
9 improve Washington's ability to respond to and provide services  
10 during future pandemics;

11 (vi) Developing strategies to increase health care system  
12 capacity such as determining which nonessential medical visits and  
13 elective procedures may be postponed, establishing facilities for the  
14 mildly and moderately ill to recover under the care and observation  
15 of appropriately trained health care providers, increasing the blood  
16 supply, and maximizing the health care workforce through increased  
17 participation in the medical reserve corps and the use of students in  
18 certain health-related fields of study;

19 (vii) Developing strategies to monitor, track, and control  
20 positive and presumptive cases including issues related to testing,  
21 isolation and quarantine, monitoring and tracking outbreaks, and  
22 deploying medical supplies and personnel;

23 (viii) Implementing guidelines for school closures during a  
24 pandemic; and

25 (ix) Establishing new revenue sources for funding pandemic  
26 preparation and response efforts, creating a dedicated emergency  
27 response fund, or implementing an emergency revenue collection  
28 policy.

29 (b) The topics identified in (a) of this subsection are intended  
30 to be illustrative and not exhaustive.

31 (4) Staff support for the task force must be provided by the  
32 military department. The military department may receive gifts,  
33 grants, and donations from public and private sources for the purpose  
34 of funding the administrative costs of the task force and must  
35 deposit any such gifts, grants, and donations into the statewide  
36 pandemic preparation and response task force account created in  
37 section 3 of this act.

38 (5) The task force shall consult with owners of small businesses,  
39 epidemiologists, and representatives of immigrant communities.

1 (6) Legislative members of the task force are reimbursed for  
2 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative  
3 members are not entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they  
4 are elected officials or are participating on behalf of an employer,  
5 governmental entity, or other organization. Any reimbursement for  
6 other nonlegislative members is subject to chapter 43.03 RCW.

7 (7) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations  
8 to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by  
9 July 1, 2022.

10 (8) This section expires August 1, 2022.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 38.52  
12 RCW to read as follows:

13 (1) The statewide pandemic preparation and response task force  
14 account is created in the custody of the state treasurer to be used  
15 solely and exclusively for the statewide pandemic preparation and  
16 response task force created in section 2 of this act.

17 (2) Revenues to the account must consist of deposits into the  
18 account, legislative appropriations, and any gifts, grants, or  
19 donations received by the military department for the purpose of  
20 funding the administrative costs of the statewide pandemic  
21 preparation and response task force.

22 (3) Expenditures from the account may be used only for the  
23 administrative costs of the statewide pandemic preparation and  
24 response task force.

25 (4) Only the adjutant general or his or her designee may  
26 authorize expenditures from the account.

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