
SENATE BILL 5937

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Senators Sefzik, Muzzall, and Schoesler

Read first time 01/24/22. Referred to Committee on State Government & Elections.

1 AN ACT Relating to providing financial assistance to aid impacted
2 communities in the recovery from floods occurring November 2021
3 through January 2022; amending RCW 38.52.105; creating a new section;
4 making appropriations; and declaring an emergency.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that many areas
7 of the state were significantly impacted by the combined snow and
8 rain events of November 2021 and January 2022. During this period,
9 the state experienced the severe impact of atmospheric river events
10 that followed a significant accumulation of mountain snow conditions,
11 combining to cause historic flooding. The legislature further finds
12 that many communities were shut off from services and livelihoods,
13 and homes, businesses, and public infrastructure were damaged. The
14 legislature further finds that the severity of flooding and other
15 weather-related events of November 2021 have been declared a major
16 disaster area by the president of the United States and the flooding
17 from both the November 2021 and January 2022 events have caused an
18 emergency proclamation by the governor. The legislature finds that it
19 is in the interest of the state to assist the impacted communities to
20 recover as soon as possible, for the peace and prosperity of all.

1 (2) The legislature intends to assist local governments and other
2 political subdivisions of the state, businesses, and residents within
3 impacted counties, by providing funding to recover from recent
4 flooding events. As part of this support, the legislature intends to
5 provide state funds to cover any matching requirements that may be
6 necessary from federal emergency management agency grant
7 opportunities.

8 **Sec. 2.** RCW 38.52.105 and 2021 c 334 s 963 are each amended to
9 read as follows:

10 The disaster response account is created in the state treasury.
11 Moneys may be placed in the account from legislative appropriations
12 and transfers, federal appropriations, or any other lawful source.
13 Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation.
14 Expenditures from the account may be used only for support of state
15 agency and local government disaster response and recovery efforts,
16 including response by state and local government and federally
17 recognized tribes to the novel coronavirus pursuant to the
18 gubernatorial declaration of emergency of February 29, 2020, and to
19 reimburse the workers' compensation funds and self-insured employers
20 under RCW 51.16.220. During the 2019-2021 and 2021-2023 fiscal
21 biennia, expenditures from the disaster response account may be used
22 for military department operations and to support wildland fire
23 suppression preparedness, prevention, and restoration activities by
24 state agencies and local governments. During the 2017-2019 and
25 2019-2021 fiscal biennia, the legislature may direct the treasurer to
26 make transfers of moneys in the disaster response account to the
27 state general fund. During the 2021-2023 biennium, expenditures from
28 the disaster response account may be used to support the recovery
29 activities from damage caused by natural disasters in November 2021
30 and January 2022 in jurisdictions as identified in presidential or
31 gubernatorial declarations. The account may also be used to cover any
32 match required from federal granting programs of local government and
33 individuals. It is the intent of the legislature that these policies
34 will be continued in subsequent fiscal biennia.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of \$85,000,000, or as much thereof
36 as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending June
37 30, 2023, from the general fund to the disaster response account for
38 the purposes specified in section 4 of this act.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The sum of \$85,000,000, or as much
2 thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal biennium
3 ending June 30, 2023, from the disaster response account to the
4 military department for the sole purpose of providing disaster
5 response and recovery assistance to political subdivisions of the
6 state, tribes, businesses, and residents that have suffered adverse
7 impacts from natural disasters in November 2021 and January 2022 in
8 jurisdictions as identified in presidential or gubernatorial
9 declarations. Disaster response and recovery assistance includes, but
10 is not limited to, financial assistance for the following activities:

- 11 (a) Temporary housing, shelter, and cash assistance;
- 12 (b) Costs to repair or replace damaged buildings, structures, and
13 public infrastructure;
- 14 (c) Demolition costs for homes, buildings, structures, and public
15 infrastructure that are beyond repair;
- 16 (d) Loss of personal property;
- 17 (e) Medical expenses; and
- 18 (f) Covering 100 percent of the cost of any financial match or
19 contribution requirements that may be necessary to receive federal or
20 state disaster relief assistance.

21 (2) Any moneys unobligated or not expended in subsection (1) of
22 this section by June 30, 2023, are reappropriated for the 2023-2025
23 fiscal biennium for the same purposes as specified in subsection (1)
24 of this section.

25 (3) In no event may the total amount appropriated in this section
26 exceed \$85,000,000.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act is necessary for the immediate
28 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
29 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
30 effect immediately.

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