

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1978

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
State Government & Elections, February 20, 2024

**Title:** An act relating to the addition of special purpose and junior taxing districts to the intrastate mutual aid system.

**Brief Description:** Adding special purpose and junior taxing districts to the intrastate mutual aid system.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Rule, Volz, Ryu, Ramel, Ormsby and Reeves; by request of Military Department.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 2/6/24, 97-0.

**Committee Activity:** State Government & Elections: 2/15/24, 2/20/24 [DP].

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Includes special purpose districts and junior taxing districts in the member jurisdictions of the Intrastate Mutual Aid System.

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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & ELECTIONS

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Hunt, Chair; Valdez, Vice Chair; Wilson, J., Ranking Member; Dozier, Fortunato, Hasegawa and Kuderer.

**Staff:** Danielle Creech (786-7412)

**Background:** Intrastate Mutual Aid System. Washington's Intrastate Mutual Aid System was established in 2011 to provide mutual assistance in an emergency among political subdivisions and federally recognized tribes that choose to participate. Member jurisdictions may request mutual assistance for response, mitigation, or recovery activities related to an emergency; or participation in drills or exercises in preparing for an emergency. Emergency

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responders holding a state- or political subdivision-issued license, certificate, or other permit verifying qualification is deemed to be licensed, certified, or permitted in the requesting member jurisdiction for the duration of the emergency, drill, or exercise, subject to limitations and conditions prescribed in writing by the chief executive officer of the requesting member jurisdiction. A requesting member jurisdiction must reimburse a responding member jurisdiction for the true and full value of all assistance provided. If authorized, a responding member jurisdiction may donate assistance to a requesting member jurisdiction.

Member Jurisdictions. Member jurisdictions of the Intrastate Mutual Aid System include political subdivisions and certain federally recognized tribes. Political subdivisions are member jurisdictions unless the jurisdiction provides a resolution or ordinance to the Military Department electing not to participate in the Intrastate Mutual Aid System. Membership includes every county, city, and town and, since 2016, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation.

**Summary of Bill:** Special purpose districts and junior taxing districts are included as member jurisdictions of the Intrastate Mutual Aid System. A special purpose district or junior taxing district that elects not to participate in the Intrastate Mutual Aid System will be released from membership after providing the Military Department with a resolution or ordinance.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This is military request legislation. We had a significant flood in my district and it changed how I think about preparation and response to emergencies. Let's allow the helpers to work together smoothly and efficiently in their preparation and response to these emergencies. This expands the ability of entities other than cities, counties and tribes to exchange resources in the event of an emergency or disaster. We have seen this done in the past but without the applicability of protections under law. We want to expand the applicability of protections of law.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Alicia Rule, Prime Sponsor; Robert Ezelle, Washington Military Department, Emergency Management Division.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.