

HB 1652 - DIGEST

(SEE ALSO PROPOSED 1ST SUB)

Provides that the wildfire prevention and protection work group created in this act shall review existing fire studies conducted by or for the department of natural resources, the joint legislative audit and review committee, and other organizations. The work group shall review the following issues: (1) Whether the forest fire protection assessment rate provides sufficient funding towards the protection of public and private lands from wildfires;

(2) Whether the statutory limitations on the purposes for which moneys collected through the forest fire protection assessment and from the landowner contingency forest fire suppression account may be expended are warranted;

(3) Whether the term "forest land," as set forth in RCW 76.04.005, properly defines the scope of land on which the forest fire protection assessment should be assessed;

(4) Whether forest fire protection assessments are currently being collected from all lands on which the department of natural resources has the duty to impose such assessments;

(5) Whether the adoption of elements from wildfire programs of other western states would improve wildfire protection and suppression in Washington state;

(6) Whether the department of natural resources' authority to protect forest land should include the authority to protect structures;

(7) Whether improvements and efficiencies in the department of natural resources' fire protection activities would impact fire suppression activities and expenses;

(8) Whether state and local building codes adequately address the dangers posed by development in areas subject to wildfires;

(9) Whether local government land use regulations, and state advisory and assistance programs, adequately address the dangers posed by development in areas subject to wildfires; and

(10) Whether insurance rates in Washington state reflect the dangers posed by development in areas subject to wildfires.

Requires the wildfire prevention and protection work group to report its findings and recommendations in the form of draft legislation to the legislature by December 1, 2007.

Appropriates the sum of thirty-five thousand dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, from the general fund to the senate for the travel expenses of the wildfire prevention and protection work group.