H-0018.5

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**HOUSE BILL 1941**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2019 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Kretz and Blake

AN ACT Relating to conducting a comprehensive review of the impact of catastrophic wildfires on communities as a means of improving government responses for the future; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Catastrophic wildfires have inflicted extraordinary levels of pain, loss, and devastation on Washington's communities. Although the economic costs of fighting these wildfires are comparatively easy to describe, the overall impact that these wildfires have on affected communities is much harder to quantify. In order to more fully understand the true impact of wildfires, and in order to better plan for community response to future wildfires, the legislature requires the completion of a comprehensive analysis of communities that have experienced catastrophic wildfires. This analysis should represent a broad-based exploration of the entire wildfire, from the moment of initial response to the lingering effects felt years into the future.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The department of natural resources and Washington State University, in consultation with the state fire marshal, the department of health, the military department, the department of social and health services, the department of ecology, the department of revenue, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the department of commerce, applicable fire protection service agencies and fire protection jurisdictions, applicable conservation districts, and other appropriate agencies, shall complete a comprehensive study of the impacts to affected communities as a result of the 2014 Carlton complex and 2015 Okanogan complex wildfires.

(2) The study must address, at a minimum, the following categories of costs, impacts, and effects:

(a) Health impacts, rates of respiratory illnesses, the extent of disproportionate mental health impacts, and impacts on vulnerable populations, such as children, the elderly, and disabled persons;

(b) Health care services, including emergency medical services and hospital services and programs;

(c) Impacts to housing, including housing availability, housing affordability, and supplies of farmworker housing;

(d) Aid relief and evacuation services, including those provided by governmental and nongovernmental organizations;

(e) Immediate road, infrastructure, and landscape stabilization;

(f) Fire suppression activities by all participants in the fire-suppression effort;

(g) Infrastructure repair, including repairs to roads, power lines, railroads, gas lines, water and sewer lines, and irrigation canals;

(h) Long-term landscape rehabilitation, including soil rehabilitation and erosion response, watershed restoration projects, and flood damage mitigation;

(i) Impacts on commercial activities, including natural resource, agricultural, service, hospitality, industrial, and retail businesses;

(j) Changes in insurance premiums and the availability of insurance coverage;

(k) Changes to health care services and costs;

(l) Property losses, including homes, businesses, crops, and timber;

(m) Impacts to animals, including pets, livestock, wildlife, and fish, including threatened and endangered species;

(n) Hydrologic impacts, including flooding, landslides, damages to infrastructure, alteration of hydrologic regime, impacts to instream flows, impacts to water storage capacity, and increased water treatment requirements;

(o) Impacts to trust beneficiaries resulting from the loss of timber on state lands and state forestlands;

(p) Impacts to recreation;

(q) Educational impacts;

(r) Impacts to cultural resources, including damage to and loss of archaeological sites;

(s) Impacts to state and local revenues, including changes in property, sales, and business taxes; and

(t) Greenhouse gas emissions, including the social cost of carbon associated with such emissions.

(3) The comprehensive impacts analysis must be completed by September 1, 2020. Upon completion, the study must, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036, be submitted to the standing committees of the house of representatives and the senate with jurisdiction over wildland firefighting. A preliminary draft of the study must, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036, be submitted to the standing committees of the house of representatives and the senate with jurisdiction over wildland firefighting by November 1, 2019.

(4) This section expires June 30, 2021.

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