S-1241.2

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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5175**

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

**By** Senate Labor & Commerce (originally sponsored by Senators Braun, Keiser, Becker, Fortunato, Palumbo, Wilson, L., Rivers, Kuderer, O'Ban, Van De Wege, and Wagoner)

AN ACT Relating to firefighter safety; and adding new sections to chapter 51.04 RCW.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 51.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The department must establish best practices to improve safety and health outcomes for firefighters, including best practices:

(a) For a proactive health and safety risk management system consisting of a joint employer and employee governance structure to oversee a continuous process of identification, evaluation, monitoring and controlling, and reporting safety and health hazards in the workplace;

(b) To reduce firefighter risk of exposure to carcinogens; and

(c) To prevent or reduce the risk of injuries and illness with particular focus on causes of compensable workers' compensation claims.

(2) Employers of firefighters who implement the best practices provided in subsection (1) of this section may be eligible for a premium discount as determined by the department according to criteria established by the department.

(3) The department must consult with firefighters and employers of firefighters in establishing the best practices and criteria for a premium discount under this section.

(4) The department may update the best practices established under this section as appropriate.

(5) For the purposes of this section, "firefighter" has the same meaning as in RCW 41.26.030(17) (a) through (c).

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 51.04 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The director is authorized to provide funding of up to two percent of the premiums paid in the prior year from the risk classes for firefighters as defined in RCW 41.26.030(17) (a) through (c) for the purposes of providing funding to employers of firefighters who have limited resources to purchase additional equipment and other gear that may be needed to follow best practices under section 1 of this act. The department may require matching funds from employers. An appropriation is not required for expenditures. Only employers who pay premiums to the state fund as defined in RCW 51.08.175 are eligible for funding under this section.

(2) The department may adopt rules if necessary to implement this section.

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