

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6553

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Security, February 2, 2016

Title: An act relating to improving emergency preparedness by expanding continuity of operations planning.

Brief Description: Providing for improving emergency preparedness by expanding continuity of operations planning.

Sponsors: Senators Liias, Roach and McCoy.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Security: 2/02/16, 2/02/16 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & SECURITY

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Roach, Chair; Pearson, Vice Chair; McCoy and Takko.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: Washington Military Department. The Washington Military Department, under the direction of the Adjutant General, administers the state's comprehensive program of emergency management. The Adjutant General is responsible for developing a comprehensive, all-hazard emergency plan for the state that includes an analysis of natural, technological, or human-caused hazards and procedures to coordinate local and state resources in responding to such hazards. In the event of a disaster beyond local control, the Governor, through the Adjutant General, may assume operational control over all or any part of emergency management functions in the state.

Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP plans). In 2013, Governor Inslee required each individual agency, board, commission, and council to develop a COOP plan for state executive branch organizations to provide essential functions and services during an emergency or disaster. Each agency's COOP plan must ensure the agency's ability to deliver essential functions and services to the citizens of the state during any disaster or emergency and coordinate actions to ensure that essential functions that overlap with other agencies continue without interruption.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In 2015, Governor Inslee signed SHB 1047 into law, giving the Adjutant General responsibility for developing and managing a program for interagency coordination and prioritization of COOP planning at state agencies. Each state agency must develop a COOP plan, updated and exercised annually, in compliance with this program.

In 2012, the Washington State Emergency Management Council's Seismic Safety Committee produced *Resilient Washington State: A Framework for Minimizing Loss and Improving Statewide Recovery After an Earthquake*. The Committee made several recommendations regarding COOP planning and information-sharing by school districts in this report.

Summary of Bill: Each school district must develop a COOP plan, updated and exercised annually, in compliance with the Adjutant General's program for interagency coordination and prioritization of COOP planning.

The Adjutant General may develop model COOP plans for use by state agencies and school districts, and may develop a program to assist state agencies and school districts in developing COOP plans.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains several effective dates. Please refer to the bill.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: One of the recommendations in the *Resilient Washington* report was to get school districts more engaged in COOP planning. School districts are vital community facilities, and it makes sense to ask them to plan for disasters. Getting kids back to school after a disaster is one of the most important recovery mechanisms. It enables parents to return to work.

OTHER: Last year, there was one position for COOP planning included but not funded in the final budget. The funding for the Emergency Management Council, which does important planning work, was eliminated years ago.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Lias, prime sponsor.

OTHER: Brig. Gen. Wally Turner, Washington Military Department.

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