

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6347

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Labor, Commerce, Research & Development, January 26, 2006

Title: An act relating to industrial insurance claims made due to emergency response.

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to industrial insurance claims made due to emergency response.

Sponsors: Senators Kline and Keiser.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Labor, Commerce, Research & Development: 1/26/06 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, COMMERCE, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kohl-Welles, Chair; Franklin, Vice Chair; Parlette, Ranking Minority Member; Brown, Hewitt, Honeyford, Keiser and Prentice.

Staff: Alison Mendiola (786-7483)

Background: In an effort to encourage rescue efforts in the event of a natural or man-made disaster, SSB 6014 was passed and enacted into law last year. Under SSB 6014, the cost of workers' compensation benefits is reimbursed from the disaster response account to the appropriate workers' compensation fund, or to the self-insured employer for employees of non-governmental employers who become injured or develop an occupational disease due to an exposure while employed in response to a request in the "life and rescue phase" of an emergency.

"Life and rescue phase" is defined as the first seventy-two hours after the occurrence of a natural or man-made disaster.

Summary of Bill: "Life and rescue phase" means the first seventy-two hours after the occurrence of a natural or man-made disaster that results in a state of emergency pursuant to State or local law. Technical changes are made so that the language added to RCW 51.16 (Industrial Insurance, Collection of Premiums) is consistent with RCW 38.52 (Emergency Management).

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: Technical changes are made. The bill passed last year refers to a "disaster". The correct terminology is declaration of an emergency, not disaster, and by current law the Governor and elected heads of political sub-divisions have the authority to declare an emergency.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Major General Timothy Lowenberg, Washington Military Department.