
Public Safety Committee

HB 2528

Brief Description: Providing for the coordination of continuity of operations efforts for elections.

Sponsors: Representatives Hudgins and Wylie.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires the Washington Military Department to maintain a copy of county continuity of operations plans for election operations, and to assist in implementation efforts.

Hearing Date: 1/22/18

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

Responsibility for Administering Elections.

The Secretary of State is the state's chief elections officer, and is responsible for supervising state and local elections, certifying results, filing and verifying initiatives and referendums, and producing and distributing voter pamphlets. County auditors are responsible for maintaining voter registration and for conducting state and local elections in a county.

Continuity of Operations Planning.

The Washington Military Department, under the direction of the Adjutant General, administers the state's comprehensive program of emergency management. In this capacity, the Adjutant General is responsible for coordinating the activities of all organizations for emergency management within the state, and must maintain liaison with and cooperate with emergency management agencies and organizations of other states and the federal government.

One of the responsibilities of the Adjutant General is to develop and manage a program for interagency coordination and prioritization of continuity of operations planning by state

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agencies. Continuity of operations planning is the internal effort of an organization to assure that the capability exists to continue essential functions and services in response to a comprehensive array of potential emergencies or disasters. Each state agency must develop a continuity of operations plan that is updated and exercised annually in compliance with the program for interagency coordination of continuity of operations planning.

The Secretary of State is required to maintain a continuity of operations plan that includes procedures for continuation of its essential functions, including elections-related activities, in the event of a disaster or emergency. Under rule, in the event of a natural or manmade disaster, the Secretary of State must consult with county auditors of impacted counties to determine the impact of the disaster on the administration of elections and how to best mitigate the impact, and may adopt emergency rules and procedures as necessary to facilitate elections administration.

Summary of Bill:

The Washington Military Department, through the Adjutant General, must maintain a copy of each county's continuity of operations plan for election operations, and must coordinate with counties and existing planning efforts to assist in plan implementation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 19, 2018.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.