

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1419

As Reported by House Committee On:
Housing, Community Development & Veterans

Title: An act relating to removing the prohibition on planning for a nuclear attack in emergency management plans.

Brief Description: Removing the prohibition on planning for a nuclear attack in emergency management plans.

Sponsors: Representatives MacEwen and Shea.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Housing, Community Development & Veterans: 1/29/19, 1/30/19 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Eliminates a prohibition on including in emergency management plans preparation for emergency evacuation or relocation of residents in anticipation of nuclear attack.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & VETERANS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Ryu, Chair; Morgan, Vice Chair; Gildon, Ranking Minority Member; Barkis, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Entenman, Frame, Leavitt and Reeves.

Staff: Cassie Jones (786-7303).

Background:

The Washington Military Department, under the direction of the Adjutant General, administers the state's comprehensive program of emergency management. "Emergency management" is defined as the preparation for and the carrying out of all emergency functions, other than functions for which the military forces are primarily responsible, to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters, and to aid victims suffering from injury or damage resulting from disasters caused by all hazards,

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whether natural, technological, or human-caused, and to provide support for search and rescue operations for persons and property in distress. "Emergency management" does not include preparation for emergency evacuation or relocation of residents in anticipation of a nuclear attack.

The Adjutant General is responsible for developing and maintaining the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (Comprehensive Plan) for the state. The Comprehensive Plan:

- must include an analysis of natural, technological, or human-caused hazards, and procedures to coordinate local and state resources in responding to such hazards;
- must direct the Military Department in times of state emergency to administer and manage the state's emergency operations center;
- must specify the use of the incident command system for multiagency/multijurisdictional operations; and
- may not include preparation for emergency evacuation, or relocation of residents in anticipation of nuclear attack.

The Adjutant General may, with approval of the Governor and agreement of the federal government, develop a plan of emergency management applicable to federally owned areas within Washington. The plan may not include preparation for emergency evacuation or relocation of residents in anticipation of nuclear attack.

Summary of Bill:

The prohibition on preparing for emergency evacuation or relocation of residents in anticipation of nuclear attack is removed from the definition of emergency management. The Military Department is no longer prohibited from including preparation for emergency evacuation or relocation of residents in anticipation of nuclear attack in the Comprehensive Plan and emergency management plans for federally owned areas within Washington.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill addresses a law that was passed in an effort to show deescalation by prohibiting planning for nuclear threats. We live in a dangerous world where terrorists and others can acquire nuclear weapons. We need to be prepared for these dangers. The state has prohibited our emergency managers from planning and preparing, and that is irresponsible. Our area is a high target for such threats. We should allow our Military Department to do the appropriate planning.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative MacEwen, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.