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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1340**

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**State of Washington 67th Legislature 2021 Regular Session**

**By** House Community & Economic Development (originally sponsored by Representatives Lovick, Harris, Fitzgibbon, Ryu, Taylor, Wicks, Dolan, Ramel, Valdez, Leavitt, Goodman, J. Johnson, Chopp, Orwall, Santos, Peterson, Gregerson, Shewmake, Davis, Ormsby, Berg, Bronoske, Duerr, Fey, Bateman, Lekanoff, Senn, Callan, Frame, Pollet, Harris-Talley, and Macri)

AN ACT Relating to the creation of the statewide pandemic preparation and response task force; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) In 2020, the world faced an enormous challenge in responding to the novel coronavirus pandemic. Washington was no exception, having been the site of the first confirmed coronavirus infection in the United States;

(b) Washington's response to the pandemic was one of the best in the nation; however, the state must conduct a comprehensive after-action review of the response to identify lessons learned, implement corrective actions, and devise new strategies for preparing for future outbreaks;

(c) This important work is critical to public health and safety;

(d) A task force of professionals from across the spectrum of affected stakeholders should be assembled to coordinate the after-action review and recommend actions the state can implement to improve pandemic response. The knowledge and experience of each field will be necessary for an effective study of Washington's response to the novel coronavirus pandemic and the creation of future response plans; and

(e) The lessons learned from both the pandemic response and the pandemic recovery could identify gaps that would inform next steps for preparedness strategies that could be implemented for a pandemic and potentially other all-hazards preparedness strategies that would benefit Washington state.

(2) The legislature intends that:

(a) The scope of the task force's authority be interpreted broadly to allow for the most complete analysis of pandemic response, using established national standards for conducting emergency or disaster after-action reviews, and to provide lessons learned and recommendations to the legislature; and

(b) The report produced by the task force be informative and comprehensive and include lessons learned and recommendations that will inform preparedness and response at all levels of government.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) A task force to conduct a comprehensive after-action review of the statewide pandemic response and recovery is established. The task force is composed of the following members:

(a) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate;

(b) One member from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(c) The secretary of the department of health, or the secretary's designee;

(d) The adjutant general of the military department, or the adjutant general's designee;

(e) The commissioner of the employment security department, or the commissioner's designee;

(f) The director of the department of financial institutions, or the director's designee;

(g) The insurance commissioner, or the commissioner's designee;

(h) The secretary of the department of social and health services, or the secretary's designee;

(i) The superintendent of public instruction, or the superintendent's designee;

(j) The director of the department of labor and industries, or the director's designee;

(k) The director of the department of commerce, or the director's designee;

(l) The director of the department of enterprise services, or the director's designee;

(m) The secretary of the department of transportation, or the secretary's designee;

(n) The director of the department of licensing, or the director's designee;

(o) The director of the office of financial management, or the director's designee;

(p) The director of the health care authority, or the director's designee;

(q) The executive director of the pharmacy quality assurance commission, or the executive director's designee;

(r) One member representing the Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs;

(s) One member representing the association of Washington businesses; and

(t) Additional members to be appointed by the governor, as follows:

(i) One member representing the office of the governor;

(ii) One member representing the association of Washington cities;

(iii) One member representing the Washington state association of counties;

(iv) One member representing emergency and transitional housing providers;

(v) One member representing a statewide association representing physicians;

(vi) One member representing a statewide association representing nurses;

(vii) One member representing a statewide association representing hospitals;

(viii) One member representing community health centers;

(ix) Two members representing local public health officials;

(x) Two members representing local emergency management agencies, one member located west of the Cascade mountains and one member located east of the Cascade mountains;

(xi) At least one member representing federally recognized tribes; and

(xii) Up to 10 members representing demographic groups that have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, that include, but are not limited to, individuals of different race, class, gender, ethnicity, and immigration status;

(xiii) One member representing leisure and hospitality industries;

(xiv) One member representing education services; and

(xv) One member representing manufacturing and trade industries.

(2) The adjutant general, or the adjutant general's designee, and the secretary of the department of health, or the secretary's designee, shall cochair the task force and convene its initial meeting.

(3)(a) The task force shall conduct a comprehensive after-action review of the COVID-19 pandemic response in accordance with established national standards for emergency or disaster after-action review. In order to improve the response to and recovery from future pandemics, the task force shall develop lessons learned and make recommendations that include, but are not limited to, the following:

(i) Aspects of the COVID-19 response that may inform future pandemic and all-hazards responses;

(ii) Emergency responses that would benefit the business community and workers during a pandemic;

(iii) Standards regarding flexible rent and repayment plans for residential and commercial tenants during a pandemic;

(iv) Whether establishing regional emergency management agencies would benefit Washington state emergency response to future pandemics;

(v) Gaps and needs for volunteers to support medical professionals in performing their pandemic emergency response functions within Washington state;

(vi) Gaps and needs for tools to measure the scale of the impact caused by a pandemic and tailoring the pandemic response to affected regions based on the scale of the impact in those regions;

(vii) Gaps and needs in health care system capacity and case tracking, monitoring, control, isolation and quarantine, and deploying medical supplies and personnel; and

(viii) Implementing guidelines for school closures during a pandemic.

(b) The topics identified in (a) of this subsection are intended to be illustrative and not exhaustive. The task force should consider issues relating to equity, disparities, and discrimination in each topic it studies and for which it makes recommendations.

(4) Staff support for the task force must be provided jointly by the military department and the department of health. The military department and the department of health may employ staff and contracted support.

(5) The task force shall consult with owners of small businesses, epidemiologists, and representatives of immigrant communities.

(6) Legislative members of the task force are reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative members are not entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they are elected officials or are participating on behalf of an employer, governmental entity, or other organization. Any reimbursement for other nonlegislative members is subject to chapter 43.03 RCW.

(7) The task force shall report its initial findings and recommendations to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by July 1, 2022. The task force shall report its final findings and recommendations to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by July 1, 2023.

(8) This section expires August 1, 2023.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  If specific funding for the purposes of this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by June 30, 2021, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and void.

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