

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2320

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

Title: An act relating to the creation of a work group to study and make recommendations on natural disaster mitigation and resiliency activities.

Brief Description: Concerning the creation of a work group to study and make recommendations on natural disaster mitigation and resiliency activities.

Sponsors: Representatives Reeves, Stanford, Bergquist, Tarleton, Slatter, Shea, Barkis, Senn and Ryu; by request of Insurance Commissioner.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Community Development, Housing & Tribal Affairs: 1/11/18, 1/16/18 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Creates a working group to review disaster mitigation and resiliency activities in Washington, other states, and at the federal level.
- Directs the working group to make recommendations by December 1, 2018, on whether Washington should create an ongoing disaster resiliency program, and the activities the program should engage in.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Ryu, Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Barkis, Ranking Minority Member; McCabe, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Jenkin, Reeves and Sawyer.

Staff: Travis Yonker (786-7383).

Background:

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.

Many states, including Washington, have embarked on efforts to mitigate loss from future disasters, including earthquakes, floods, and fires. For instance, in 2012, Washington's Emergency Management Council's Seismic Safety Committee issued a report and recommendations on improving statewide recovery after an earthquake. Other public entities, such as the California Earthquake Authority, aim to assist in the recovery process following a natural disaster.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A working group is created to study current natural disaster and resiliency activities currently being done in Washington, other states, and at the federal level. The working group will also review information on uptake in Washington for disaster-related insurance.

The working group will consist of 17 members, including the following:

- the Insurance Commissioner, or a designee, as the chair of the working group;
- one member from each of the four legislative caucuses;
- a representative from the Governor's Resilient Washington work group;
- a representative from the Washington State Association of Counties;
- a representative from the Association of Washington Cities;
- a representative from the state Building Code Council;
- the Supervisor of the Department of Natural Resources or designee;
- the Director of the Washington State Military Department or designee;
- the Superintendent of Public Instruction, or a designee;
- the Director of the Department of Ecology, or a designee;
- the Director of the Department of Commerce, or a designee;
- a representative from Washington Association of Building Officials; and
- two representatives from the property and casualty insurance industry.

The working group may add other participants to the working group for specific topic discussions or subcommittees. The working group will meet during the 2018 interim and, by December 1, 2018, make recommendations on the following:

- whether Washington should create an ongoing disaster resiliency program;
- the activities the program should engage in;
- how the program should coordinate with state agencies and other entities; and
- how the program should be funded.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill adds members to the working group, including the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Director of the Department of Ecology, the Director of the Department of Commerce, a representative from the Washington Association of Building Officials, and a second representative from the property and casualty insurance industry. The substitute bill clarifies that the working group may add other participants to the working group for specific topic discussions or subcommittees. The substitute bill requires the working group to also review how other states and the federal government fund their disaster mitigation and resiliency programs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: 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 working group is a good opportunity to think proactively about how to deal with disasters, and involve many players in addition to the insurance industry. This is a positive step in making Washington more resilient, and to build on disaster mitigation efforts that may be already under way.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Reeves, prime sponsor; Jason Marquiss, Washington Military Department; Lonnie Johns-Brown, Office of the Insurance Commissioner; Amy Brackenbury, Washington Association of Building Officials; Randy Newman, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Jean Leonard, State Farm Insurance, Washington Insurers, and National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.