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**SENATE BILL 5074**

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

**By** Senators Wagoner, Dhingra, and Wilson, C.

AN ACT Relating to establishing safe station pilot programs for persons in need of substance use disorder treatment; adding a new section to chapter 41.05 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 70.385 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that the safe station program is a concept that started with successful model programs in the cities of Manchester and Nashua, New Hampshire and has spread throughout New England, including a widespread presence in Rhode Island. Participating fire departments are designated as safe stations and provide scheduled drop-in services or may have a scheduled response unit to address and respond to substance abuse treatment service inquiries at fire station locations. Basic screening is provided by mental health professionals, substance use disorder professionals, licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, or emergency medical technicians who are trained to provide a welcoming environment and connect persons to treatment support and services, including transportation to acute medical services when warranted. Safe spaces break down barriers for individuals and allow them to speak and interact with supportive peers in recovery. Safe stations provide an alternative to emergency rooms and can serve as a diversion for people who need help but are not at the point of crisis.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 41.05 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to appropriation, the authority shall manage a grant program to award funding to fire departments in the state of Washington to implement safe station pilot programs.

(2) Certified substance use disorder peer specialists may be employed in a safe station pilot program under this section.

(3) A person referred to crisis services by a safe station grant program has priority for admission to evaluation and treatment facilities and secure withdrawal management and stabilization facilities.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 70.385 RCW to read as follows:

Certified substance use disorder peer counselors may be employed in the pilot program established under section 2 of this act.

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