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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1620**

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**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2022 Regular Session**

**By** House Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Leavitt, Boehnke, Shewmake, Ryu, Robertson, Wicks, Duerr, Ramel, Valdez, Bronoske, Callan, Ramos, Rule, Santos, Simmons, Pollet, Hackney, and Taylor)

READ FIRST TIME 01/31/22.

1 AN ACT Relating to responding to extreme weather events; amending  
2 RCW 38.52.105; adding a new section to chapter 38.52 RCW; and  
3 creating new sections.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** This act may be known and cited as the  
6 extreme weather protection act.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The legislature finds that cold storm  
8 patterns in the winter months, dangerous heat waves in the summer,  
9 and other major weather events present severe public health  
10 challenges for individuals and families in Washington.

11 (2) Moreover, the legislature finds that these challenges are not  
12 experienced equally across the population. The elderly, people with  
13 disabilities, people with low incomes, farmworkers, people  
14 experiencing homelessness, and people who historically were zoned to  
15 areas that faced increased environmental impacts during weather  
16 events are the most at risk for losing their life or being severely  
17 impacted by weather-related ailments.

18 (3) The legislature finds that during the record heatwave of  
19 2021, the deadliest weather-related disaster in Washington on record,  
20 over 100 people in Washington and nearly 800 people in the northwest

1 region lost their lives as a result of inability to access cooling  
2 centers or resources and hundreds more visited emergency rooms with  
3 heat-related illnesses.

4 (4) The legislature acknowledges that according to scientists at  
5 the Pacific Northwest national laboratory, it is predicted that these  
6 severe weather events will happen more frequently because of the  
7 changing climate.

8 (5) The legislature finds that the cost to local governments to  
9 provide heating and cooling centers are sometimes insurmountable and  
10 intends to provide supplemental resources to local jurisdictions and  
11 tribal partners where local resources are not available during  
12 extreme weather events.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 38.52  
14 RCW to read as follows:

15 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
16 specific purpose, the department shall develop and implement an  
17 extreme weather response grant program for the purpose of assisting  
18 political subdivisions and federally recognized tribes with the costs  
19 of responding to community needs during periods of extremely hot or  
20 cold weather or in situations of severe poor air quality from  
21 wildfire smoke. The department may adopt rules to administer the  
22 extreme weather response grant program.

23 (2) The department may award grants to political subdivisions and  
24 federally recognized tribes for reimbursement of costs in accordance  
25 with subsection (3) of this section if the costs were incurred by  
26 communities that have demonstrated a lack of local resources to  
27 address community needs and were incurred for the benefit of socially  
28 vulnerable populations. Social vulnerability refers to the resilience  
29 of communities when confronted by external stresses on human health,  
30 such as natural or human-caused disasters. Socially vulnerable  
31 populations include, but are not limited to, individuals with  
32 disabilities, individuals without vehicles, older adults, individuals  
33 with low incomes or experiencing homelessness, and individuals with  
34 limited English proficiency.

35 (3) The costs associated with the following activities are  
36 eligible for reimbursement under the extreme weather response grant  
37 program:

1 (a) Establishing and operating warming and cooling centers,  
2 including rental of equipment, purchase of supplies and water,  
3 staffing, and other associated costs;

4 (b) Transporting individuals to warming and cooling centers;

5 (c) Purchasing fans or other supplies needed for cooling of  
6 congregate living settings;

7 (d) Providing emergency temporary housing such as rental of a  
8 hotel or convention center; and

9 (e) Other related activities necessary for life safety during a  
10 period of extremely hot or cold weather or in situations of severe  
11 poor air quality from wildfire smoke as determined by the department.

12 (4) The department shall, upon request, provide information to  
13 political subdivisions and federally recognized tribes regarding the  
14 establishment and operation of warming and cooling centers.

15 (5) Grant funding awarded under this section must be used to  
16 supplement, not supplant, other federal, state, and local funding for  
17 emergency response.

18 (6) For purposes of this section, "political subdivision" means  
19 any county, city, or town that has established a local organization  
20 for emergency management or any joint local organization for  
21 emergency management established pursuant to RCW 38.52.070.

22 **Sec. 4.** RCW 38.52.105 and 2021 c 334 s 963 are each amended to  
23 read as follows:

24 The disaster response account is created in the state treasury.  
25 Moneys may be placed in the account from legislative appropriations  
26 and transfers, federal appropriations, or any other lawful source.  
27 Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation.  
28 Expenditures from the account may be used only for support of state  
29 agency and local government disaster response and recovery efforts,  
30 including the awarding of grants under section 3 of this act,  
31 response by state and local government and federally recognized  
32 tribes to the novel coronavirus pursuant to the gubernatorial  
33 declaration of emergency of February 29, 2020, and to reimburse the  
34 workers' compensation funds and self-insured employers under RCW  
35 51.16.220. During the 2019-2021 and 2021-2023 fiscal biennia,  
36 expenditures from the disaster response account may be used for  
37 military department operations and to support wildland fire  
38 suppression preparedness, prevention, and restoration activities by  
39 state agencies and local governments. During the 2017-2019 and

1 2019-2021 fiscal biennia, the legislature may direct the treasurer to  
2 make transfers of moneys in the disaster response account to the  
3 state general fund. It is the intent of the legislature that these  
4 policies will be continued in subsequent fiscal biennia.

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