

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6100

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to making expenditures from the budget stabilization account for declared catastrophic events.

Brief Description: Making expenditures from the budget stabilization account for declared catastrophic events.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Robinson and Nguyen; by request of Office of Financial Management).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/15/24, 2/22/24 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Appropriates \$21,143,000 from the Budget Stabilization Account for fire suppression costs incurred by the Department of Natural Resources during the 2023 fire season.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Berg, Callan, Chopp, Davis, Fitzgibbon, Lekanoff, Pollet, Riccelli, Ryu, Senn, Simmons, Slatter, Springer, Stonier and Tharinger.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 6 members: Representatives Couture, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Dye, Harris, Rude, Sandlin and Wilcox.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Corry, Ranking Minority Member; Chambers, Assistant Ranking Minority Member;

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Connors, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Schmick and Stokesbary.

Staff: Dan Jones (786-7118).

Background:

The Budget Stabilization Account (BSA) is an appropriated account originally created in the state Constitution in 2007 and modified in 2011 that may be thought of as an account for operating budget reserves. Funds must be transferred into the BSA each year equal to 1 percent of General State Revenues.

Under certain conditions, additional transfers are required. Funds may be appropriated from the BSA with a constitutional majority under certain periods of forecasted low employment growth, or for declared disasters and limited to that specific purpose. Funds may be appropriated from the BSA with at least a three-fifths vote by the Legislature in all other instances.

On August 19, 2023, the Governor declared a state of emergency in all Washington counties due to threats to life and property from existing and threatened wildfires.

Summary of Bill:

The sum of \$21,143,000 is appropriated from the BSA for state fiscal year 2024 and is provided solely for fire suppression costs incurred by the Department of Natural Resources in the 2023 fire season.

Appropriation: The sum of \$21,143,000 is appropriated.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a companion to House Bill 2170. There were catastrophic fires in Washington last summer, which burned 165,000 acres. The amount of the appropriation in the bill is the latest update from the Department of Natural Resources on their costs for the fire season. The bill simply appropriates from the Budget Stabilization Account for those fire costs.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: K.D. Chapman-See, Office of Financial Management.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.