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**Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Committee**

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**HB 1539**

**Brief Description:** Addressing wildfire protection and mitigation.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Reeves, Dent, Springer, Walen, Ryu, Ramel, Bernbaum and Salahuddin.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Establishes the Wildfire Mitigation and Resiliency Standards Work Group.

**Hearing Date:** 2/12/25

**Staff:** Lily Smith (786-7175).

**Background:**

Wildfire Mitigation and Resilience.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is responsible for forest fire prevention and response on both private and state-owned forestland in Washington. The DNR, in collaboration with other entities, provides guidance, funding, and other forms of assistance through multiple programs to support community resilience and preparedness for wildfires. The DNR must assess areas at significant risk of wildfire and begin providing decadal assessments to the Legislature by 2027.

A number of counties and communities have created community wildfire protection plans to outline priorities for the protection of life, property, and critical infrastructure before and during wildfires.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

### Cancellation or Nonrenewal of an Insurance Policy.

An insurance contract establishes conditions under which the insurer may cancel or not renew an insurance policy. An insurer must give the insured a certain number of days written notice prior to the effective date of the cancellation or nonrenewal.

### **Summary of Bill:**

#### Wildfire Mitigation and Resiliency Standards Work Group.

The Wildfire Mitigation and Resiliency Standards Work Group (work group) is established, to include:

- the Insurance Commissioner or designee;
- the DNR Commissioner of Public Lands or designee;
- representatives from the property and casualty insurance industry;
- a representative each from the insurance institute for business and home safety, local emergency management, and the Washington fire chiefs association; and
- *ex officio* members from each of the two largest caucuses of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The Work Group must study and make recommendations on:

- development and alignment of wildfire property mitigation standards with nationally recognized, science-based standards;
- enhancing wildfire mitigation at the community level;
- sharing data between appropriate state agencies and the insurance industry regarding successful implementation of wildfire mitigation efforts;
- increasing transparency with consumers regarding wildfire hazard and risk; and
- establishing a homeowner grant program for purposes such as retrofitting and evaluations, with framework recommendations for decreasing insurance nonrenewals.

The Work Group must submit a report to the Legislature, the Office of the Insurance Commissioner, and the Department of Natural Resources by December 1, 2025.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.