

FINAL BILL REPORT

EHB 1628

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating the fire service policy board.

Sponsors: Representatives Bronoske, Griffey, Schmidt, Simmons, Nance, Davis and Salahuddin.

House Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations
Senate Committee on State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections

Background:

The State Fire Marshal's Office.

The Director of Fire Protection is the State Fire Marshal. The State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO) is located within the Washington State Patrol (WSP).

The SFMO must:

- provide certification for firefighter professional qualifications;
- coordinate and deliver statewide training for firefighting and hazardous materials;
- license and issue certifications to businesses and individuals performing design, installation, testing, and maintenance of fire sprinkler systems;
- publish information regarding fire incidents around the state and timely information for Washington fire service agencies;
- conduct fire and life safety inspections in childcare, health care, and residential care facilities;
- regulate fireworks manufacturers, wholesalers, importers, and general display and pyrotechnic operator licensees for statutory compliance;
- test and certify all cigarette brands sold in the state; and
- serve as the fire resources coordinator when the Washington State Fire Services Mobilization Plan is implemented.

Fire Service Delivery Workgroup.

In 2023 the Fire Service Delivery Workgroup (Workgroup) was established to evaluate

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existing funding and service delivery models for fire services provided by the SFMO. The Workgroup determined that the SFMO cannot maintain adequate levels of response and service to communities without adequate and sustained funding for fire services. The Workgroup concluded that the WSP and the SFMO have experienced significant changes since they were integrated and that the state's population, demographics, public safety expectations, and hazard risks have substantially grown, diversified, and evolved. Based on its findings, the Workgroup made several recommendations, including:

- creating a workgroup to study and define the necessary steps for an independent SFMO agency;
- creating a legislative liaison position to represent fire service stakeholders and the SFMO;
- establishing the Fire Service Advisory Committee to work with the legislative liaison, the SFMO, the WSP, the Office of Financial Management and the Governor's Office;
- enabling wage parity to sustain fire service recruitment and retention;
- revising civilian staff hiring policies at the WSP to narrow the pool of eligible candidates for noncommissioned SFMO positions;
- allocating adequate funding to firefighting training programs, the All-Risk Mobilization Program, and the SFMO's four unfunded mandates; and
- considering the SFMO's technology modernization study's recommendations.

Summary:

The Washington State Fire Policy Board (Board) is established. The Board advises the Director of Fire Protection on matters related to the State Fire Marshal's Office (SFMO). The Board must develop recommendations for agency budget requests and strategies to enhance the safe and effective delivery of fire service training and resources.

The Board consists of the following members:

- the President of the Washington State Council of Firefighters or the President's designee;
- the President of the Washington State Firefighters' Association or the President's designee;
- the Executive Director of the Washington State Fire Commissioners Association or the Director's designee;
- the Executive Director of the Washington Fire Chiefs Association or the Director's designee;
- the President of the Washington State Fire Marshals Association or the President's Designee; and
- the Director of Fire Protection or the Director's designee, as a nonvoting ex officio member.

Members of the Board serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for travel expenses. Details regarding the frequency of Board meetings are provided.

The Board is encouraged to seek input from agencies, organizations, and representatives from industries regulated by the SFMO. The Board is permitted to create voluntary advisory committees. Individuals serving on an advisory committee or in an advisory capacity are prohibited from receiving any compensation or reimbursement.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	97	0	
Senate	48	0	(Senate amended)
House	95	0	(House concurred)

Effective: July 27, 2025