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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5853**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2026 Regular Session**

**By** Senate State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators J. Wilson, Holy, Lovelett, McCune, Wagoner, Dozier, Torres, Short, Warnick, Braun, Nobles, Bateman, Fortunato, Frame, and Trudeau)

READ FIRST TIME 02/02/26.

1 AN ACT Relating to protecting elected officials from political  
2 violence by creating the statewide emergency public official  
3 notification system; reenacting and amending RCW 38.52.520; adding  
4 new sections to chapter 38.52 RCW; adding a new section to chapter  
5 42.56 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** On June 14, 2025, Minnesota house of  
8 representatives speaker Emerita Melissa Hortman of the democratic  
9 caucus and her husband Mark Hortman were stalked and murdered. On  
10 that same day, Minnesota state senator of the democratic caucus John  
11 Hoffman and his wife Yvette Hoffman were stalked and shot by the same  
12 alleged individual who murdered representative Hortman and her  
13 husband.

14 It is the intent of the legislature to streamline more efficient  
15 communication and prevent needless violence by creating an optional  
16 emergency notification system for public officials. This system will  
17 alert all public officials as soon as practicable when any enrolled  
18 public official contacts a 911 emergency communications system and  
19 upon confirmation of a targeted threat to any public official. Had an  
20 emergency notification system been implemented in Minnesota, senator  
21 Hoffman and his wife could have been notified of representative

1 Hortman and her husband's murder and taken whatever precautions  
2 necessary to avoid harm.

3 Therefore, this statewide emergency public official notification  
4 system promotes more efficient communication under urgent  
5 circumstances to share substantive and useful information between  
6 first responders and public officials. This will prevent needless  
7 violence and promote safety for all of Washington's public figures in  
8 the years to come.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 38.52  
10 RCW to read as follows:

11 (1) The military department, shall establish a statewide  
12 emergency public official notification system that:

13 (a) Notifies all public officials that they may voluntarily  
14 enroll in the statewide emergency public official notification  
15 system. The military department must:

16 (i) Provide enrollment information about the emergency public  
17 official notification system to all newly elected public officials  
18 within 30 days of the commencement of their term; and

19 (ii) Provide enrollment information about the emergency public  
20 official notification system to all current public officials within  
21 30 days of the effective date of this section;

22 (b) Maintains a database of public officials who have voluntarily  
23 enrolled in the statewide emergency public official notification  
24 system; and

25 (c) Provides emergency notification to all public officials as  
26 soon as practicable when any enrolled public official contacts a 911  
27 emergency communications system and upon confirmation of a targeted  
28 threat to any public official, enrolled or not. This emergency  
29 notification must not include the name, address, or personal  
30 information of the individuals who contact the 911 emergency  
31 communications system and likewise any individuals targeted.

32 (2) The military department, shall ensure that information  
33 submitted to the statewide emergency public official notification  
34 system is shared with the statewide 911 emergency communications  
35 system as defined in RCW 82.14B.020, to be contained in a database  
36 that is intended for the purpose of display at a public safety  
37 answering point with incoming 911 voice or data, which is exempt from  
38 public inspection and copying under chapter 42.56 RCW.

1 (3) The military department shall establish rules and procedures  
2 for:

3 (a) Enrollment in the statewide emergency public official  
4 notification system;

5 (b) Notification of public officials of enrollment eligibility;

6 (c) Emergency notification of all public officials in the event  
7 of a 911 emergency communication by an enrolled public official;

8 (d) Data storage which must be in compliance with existing data  
9 protection practices used by law enforcement; and

10 (e) Notification of incidents of statewide impact to the  
11 department of enterprise services.

12 (4) The secretary of state may share a list of public officials  
13 who are eligible to enroll in the emergency public official  
14 notification system with the military department.

15 (5) For the purposes of this section, "public official" means a  
16 person holding office under a city, county, or state government, or  
17 the federal government who performs a public function and in so doing  
18 is vested with the exercise of some sovereign power of government,  
19 and includes all assistants, deputies, clerks, and employees of any  
20 public officer and all persons lawfully exercising or assuming to  
21 exercise any of the powers or functions of a public officer.

22 **Sec. 3.** RCW 38.52.520 and 2022 c 286 s 6 and 2022 c 203 s 9 are  
23 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

24 A state 911 coordination office, headed by the state 911  
25 coordinator, is established in the emergency management division of  
26 the department. Duties of the office include:

27 (1) Administering the 911 account established in RCW 38.52.540;

28 (2) Seeking advice and assistance from, and providing staff  
29 support for the 911 advisory committee;

30 (3) Providing and supporting 911 emergency communications  
31 systems, which may include procurement, funding, ownership, and  
32 management;

33 (4) Assisting the counties and Washington state patrol public  
34 safety answering points by distributing state 911 emergency  
35 communications system funding within the priorities identified in RCW  
36 38.52.545. When designated as a primary public safety answering point  
37 by the county, the state 911 coordination office may provide funding  
38 for Washington state patrol public safety answering point 911  
39 emergency communications systems;

1 (5) Develop forms, submission dates, and methods as necessary for  
2 all public safety answering points to submit reports;

3 (6) Providing staff support and assistance to the certification  
4 board established under RCW 38.60.030 that includes, but may not be  
5 limited to:

6 (a) Establishing forms and procedures necessary to administer  
7 chapter 38.60 RCW;

8 (b) Issuing a public safety telecommunicator registration and  
9 certification to any applicant who has met the requirements for  
10 certification under chapter 38.60 RCW; and

11 (c) Maintaining the official record for the department of all  
12 applicants and persons with registrations and certificates under  
13 chapter 38.60 RCW;

14 (7) Recommending to the utilities and transportation commission  
15 by August 31st of each year the level of the state 911 emergency  
16 communications system excise tax established in RCW 82.14B.030(5) for  
17 the following year;

18 (8) Establishing rules that:

19 (a) Determine eligible components of the 911 emergency  
20 communications system, its administration, and operation that the  
21 state and county 911 excise taxes, under RCW 82.14B.030, may be used  
22 to fund;

23 (b) Determine how appropriated funds from the state 911 account  
24 shall be distributed, considering the baseline level of 911 emergency  
25 communications system service needs of individual counties and  
26 county-designated Washington state patrol primary public safety  
27 answering points for specific assistance; and

28 (c) Specify statewide 911 emergency communications system and  
29 service standards, consistent with applicable state and federal law.  
30 The authority given to the state 911 coordinator in this section is  
31 limited to setting standards as set forth in this section and does  
32 not constitute authority to regulate radio communications service  
33 companies or interconnected voice over internet protocol service  
34 companies; (~~and~~)

35 (9) Annually providing a complete report to the 911 advisory  
36 committee on:

37 (a) Efforts to modernize their existing 911 emergency  
38 communications system;

1 (b) All public safety answering points expenditures for  
2 administrative and operational costs and expenses of the 911  
3 emergency communications system; and

4 (c) Any additional data that may be identified by the 911  
5 advisory committee; and

6 (10) Providing data and information to the military department  
7 when any public official enrolled in the statewide emergency public  
8 official notification system contacts a 911 emergency communications  
9 system and upon confirmation of a targeted threat to any public  
10 official as provided in section 2 of this act.

11 NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 38.52  
12 RCW to read as follows:

13 (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, records  
14 maintained by the military department for the statewide emergency  
15 public official notification system is exempt from public inspection  
16 and copying under section 5 of this act.

17 (2) Information maintained by the military department for the  
18 statewide emergency public official notification system may be  
19 provided to a public official upon a request for inspection.

20 NEW SECTION. Sec. 5. A new section is added to chapter 42.56  
21 RCW to read as follows:

22 All or part of any records, reports, data, or information  
23 contained therein maintained by the military department for the  
24 statewide emergency public official notification system under chapter  
25 38.52 RCW are exempt from disclosure under this chapter, except as  
26 provided in section 4(2) of this act.

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