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**SENATE BILL 5853**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2026 Regular Session**

**By** Senators J. Wilson, Holy, Lovelett, McCune, Wagoner, Dozier, Torres, Short, Warnick, Braun, Nobles, Bateman, Fortunato, Frame, and Trudeau

Prefiled 12/08/25. Read first time 01/12/26. Referred to Committee on State Government, Tribal Affairs & Elections.

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 secretary of state, with the assistance of the military  
12 department, shall establish a statewide emergency public official  
13 notification system that:

14 (a) Notifies all public officials that they may voluntarily  
15 enroll in the statewide emergency public official notification  
16 system. The secretary of state must:

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

20 (ii) Provide enrollment information about the emergency public  
21 official notification system to all current public officials within  
22 30 days of the effective date of this section;

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

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

33 (2) The secretary of state, with the assistance of the military  
34 department, shall ensure that information submitted to the statewide  
35 emergency public official notification system is shared with the  
36 statewide 911 emergency communications system as defined in RCW  
37 82.14B.020, to be contained in a database that is intended for the  
38 purpose of display at a public safety answering point with incoming

1 911 voice or data, which is exempt from public inspection and copying  
2 under chapter 42.56 RCW.

3 (3) The secretary of state shall establish rules and procedures  
4 for:

5 (a) Enrollment in the statewide emergency public official  
6 notification system;

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

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

10 (d) Data storage which must be in compliance with existing data  
11 protection practices used by law enforcement and the secretary of  
12 state.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

4 (a) Establishing forms and procedures necessary to administer  
5 chapter 38.60 RCW;

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

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

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

16 (8) Establishing rules that:

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

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

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

33 (9) Annually providing a complete report to the 911 advisory  
34 committee on:

35 (a) Efforts to modernize their existing 911 emergency  
36 communications system;

37 (b) All public safety answering points expenditures for  
38 administrative and operational costs and expenses of the 911  
39 emergency communications system; and

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

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

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

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

14 (2) Information maintained by the secretary of state for the  
15 statewide emergency public official notification system may be  
16 provided to a public official upon a request for inspection.

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

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

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