

Disaster Resiliency and Mitigation Work Group

Creating a work group to study and make recommendations on natural disaster mitigation and resiliency activities.

November 9, 2018

Residents of this state have been impacted by natural disasters such as floods, landslides, wildfires, and earthquakes and continue to be a risk from these and other natural disasters. In 2015, the state's wildfire season was the largest in Washington State history, burning more than 1 million acres and costing more than \$253 million. In 2016, almost 294,000 acres burned in Washington State, and there were more than 430 National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) claims filed, totaling over \$7 million. Washington State also has the second highest earthquake risk in the nation, estimated by the federal emergency management agency (FEMA) to exceed \$438 million. It is critical that more be done to prepare this state for disasters, and to put in place strategies to mitigate the impacts of the disasters. To address this critical need, this legislation will create a work group that will review disaster mitigation and preparation projects in other states and those currently being done in this state. The work group will make recommendations for how this state's efforts to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters can be expanded and coordinated, and whether or not an ongoing disaster resiliency program should be created.

Bill highlights

A work group is created to study what activities other states are pursuing and make recommendations to the legislature and the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC)

- Working group members will include representatives from the OIC, the Legislature, Resilient Washington work group, Washington Association of Cities, Washington State Association of Counties, State Building Code Council, Department of Natural Resources, Emergency Management Division, Ecology, property & casualty insurance carriers, among other key stakeholders.
- Review disaster mitigation and resiliency activities being done in Washington state and other states
- Review how other states are coordinating their disaster resiliency and risk mitigation work
- How other states and the federal government fund their coordination and resiliency work
- Whether Washington state should create an ongoing disaster resiliency program and what the program should do and how it should be funded
- Preliminary report due on November 1, 2019
- Final Report due on December 1, 2020