
SENATE BILL 5106

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2019 Regular Session

By Senators Das, Mullet, Frockt, Keiser, Zeiger, and Kuderer; by request of Insurance Commissioner

Prefiled 01/09/19. Read first time 01/14/19. Referred to Committee on Financial Institutions, Economic Development & Trade.

1 AN ACT Relating to the creation of a work group to study and make
2 recommendations on natural disaster mitigation and resiliency
3 activities; adding a new section to chapter 48.02 RCW; and creating a
4 new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that residents of
7 this state have been impacted by natural disasters such as floods,
8 landslides, wildfires, and earthquakes and continue to be at risk
9 from these and other natural disasters. In 2016, insured losses from
10 natural disasters in the United States totaled almost twenty-four
11 billion dollars. In 2015, Washington state had the largest wildfire
12 season in state history, with more than one million acres burned and
13 costing more than two hundred fifty-three million dollars. In 2017,
14 four hundred four thousand two hundred twenty-three acres burned in
15 Washington state and there were more than four hundred thirty
16 national flood insurance program claims filed, totaling over seven
17 million dollars.

18 The legislature finds that Washington state has the second
19 highest earthquake risk in the nation, estimated by the federal
20 emergency management agency to exceed four hundred thirty-eight
21 million dollars per year. The 2001 Nisqually earthquake caused more

1 than two billion dollars in damage. A Seattle fault earthquake will
2 cause an estimated thirty-three billion dollars in damage, and a
3 Cascadia subduction zone earthquake will cause an estimated amount of
4 over forty-nine billion dollars in damage.

5 The legislature finds that it is critical to better prepare this
6 state for disasters and to put in place strategies to mitigate the
7 impacts of disasters. To address this critical need, the legislature
8 is creating a work group to review disaster mitigation and
9 preparation projects in this state and other states, make
10 recommendations regarding how to coordinate and expand state efforts
11 to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters, and evaluate whether an
12 ongoing disaster resiliency program should be created.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 48.02
14 RCW to read as follows:

15 (1) A work group to study and make recommendations on natural
16 disaster and resiliency activities is hereby created. The work group
17 membership shall be composed of:

18 (a) The insurance commissioner or his or her designee, who shall
19 serve as the chair of the work group;

20 (b) One member from each of the four major caucuses of the
21 legislature;

22 (c) A representative from the governor's resilient Washington
23 work group;

24 (d) A representative from the Washington state association of
25 counties;

26 (e) A representative from the association of Washington cities;

27 (f) A representative from the state building code council;

28 (g) The commissioner of the department of natural resources or
29 his or her designee;

30 (h) The director of the Washington state military department or
31 his or her designee;

32 (i) The superintendent of public instruction or his or her
33 designee;

34 (j) The director of the department of ecology or his or her
35 designee;

36 (k) The director of the department of commerce or his or her
37 designee;

38 (l) A representative from the Washington association of building
39 officials;

1 (m) Two representatives from the property and casualty insurance
2 industry, to be selected by the insurance commissioner or his or her
3 designee, through an application process;

4 (n) A representative from public utility districts to be selected
5 by a state association of public utility districts;

6 (o) A representative selected by the Washington state commission
7 on African-American affairs, the Washington state commission on
8 Hispanic affairs, the governor's office of Indian affairs, and the
9 Washington state commission on Asian Pacific American affairs to
10 represent the three commissions on the work group; and

11 (p) Other state agency representatives or stakeholder group
12 representatives, at the discretion of the work group, for the purpose
13 of participating in specific topic discussions or subcommittees.

14 (2) The work group shall engage in the following activities:

15 (a) Review disaster mitigation and resiliency activities being
16 done in this state by public and private entities;

17 (b) Review disaster mitigation and resiliency activities being
18 done in other states and at the federal level;

19 (c) Review information on uptake in this state for disaster
20 related insurance, such as flood and earthquake insurance;

21 (d) Review information on how other states are coordinating
22 disaster mitigation and resiliency work including, but not limited
23 to, the work of entities such as the California earthquake authority;

24 (e) Review how other states and the federal government fund their
25 disaster mitigation and resiliency activities and programs; and

26 (f) Make recommendations to the legislature and office of the
27 insurance commissioner regarding:

28 (i) Whether this state should create an ongoing disaster
29 resiliency program;

30 (ii) What activities the program should engage in;

31 (iii) How the program should coordinate with state agencies and
32 other entities engaged in disaster mitigation and resiliency work;

33 (iv) Where the program should be housed; and

34 (v) How the program should be funded.

35 (3) The work group shall submit, in compliance with RCW
36 43.01.036, a preliminary report of recommendations to the
37 legislature, the office of the insurance commissioner, the governor,
38 the office of the superintendent of public instruction, and the

1 commissioner of public lands by November 1, 2019, and a final report
2 by December 1, 2020.

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