

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/05/15

Action: Do Pass With Amendments To The A-Eng Bill. (Printed B-Eng.)

Meeting Dates: 04/28, 05/05

Vote:

Yeas: 4 - Boquist, Monnes Anderson, Olsen, President Courtney

Prepared By: Cheyenne Ross, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Authorizes media access to restricted areas under emergency declaration for purpose of maintaining critical equipment. Prohibits emergency personnel from commandeering broadcaster property. Requires Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to authorize private broadcasters association to plan and create program to issue credentials for authorized persons. Requires such plan to include specified training. Requires private broadcasters association to submit annual report to OEM.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Objective to ensure functioning facilities and transmitters to remain on-air, not gather news
- Amendment to narrow scope of access
- Bona fide emergencies only
- Deference to on-site incident commanders

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Permits access only to maintain critical equipment.

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 2210-B permits broadcasters to access restricted areas during a declared emergency, unless otherwise prohibited by law or by an incident commander, in order to maintain critical equipment. The measure prohibits emergency service providers from seizing property that belongs to the media and requires the Office of Emergency Management to authorize a private association of broadcasters to develop a program and issue credentials.