

House Bill 4068 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Management

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Transfers responsibility for the Oregon Homeland Security Council to the Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM). Transfers the Oregon Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund to the (OEM). Requires certain government officials and management-level employees to complete incident command and emergency response education. Directs (OEM) to create, fill, and utilize six positions in support of the emergency notification system. Directs certain public bodies to conduct periodic emergency response exercises. Directs Oregon Homeland Security Council to establish a program to ensure a robust stock of emergency supplies and equipment. Directs the Oregon Business Development to establish and administer an Oregon Resiliency Partnership Program. Modifies membership of Emergency Preparedness Advisory Council. Authorizes the Governor and Oregon Department of Transportation to issue and extend commercial driver licenses in certain emergencies. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

BACKGROUND: The Oregon Homeland Security Council was established by House Bill 2101 (2005) to assess risks to the state with an emphasis on domestic terrorism and critical infrastructure. The Council is made up of legislators and the heads of several state agencies. Currently, the Council resides within the Office of the Governor; House Bill 4068 moves it under the umbrella of the Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM).

The Oregon Pre-Disaster Mitigation Fund was established by House Bill 3626 (2008) to utilize moneys from federal grants for pre-disaster mitigation efforts to issue grants through the Oregon Military Department, which formerly housed the Oregon Office of Emergency Management. House Bill 4068 transfers the Fund to the Department of Emergency Management.

House Bill 4068 also requires all elected officials and state agency administrative directors, as well as all persons in management services in state government, to complete an introductory course on incident command and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). Originally issued in 2004, NIMS provides a consistent, nationwide framework for partner agencies and entities throughout federal, state, and local government to work together to prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents.

House Bill 4068 directs OEM to create, fill, and utilize six positions to support the emergency notification system. The system is maintained by the Department of State Police, and, beginning July 2022, will operate under a service agreement with OEM for daily operation of the system as a continuously available communications network and a component of the state's emergency operations center.

The measure also directs OEM to develop a program of periodic emergency exercises, including: an annual multi-disciplinary, all-hazards emergency response exercise involving at least 10 percent of all public/private safety agencies in the state; and an annual internal exercise testing at least one element of the state's emergency preparedness. In addition, each county is directed to conduct a tabletop learning exercise related to emergency response. OEM is directed to consult with the Oregon Homeland Security Council on priorities for these exercises.

During the early months of the pandemic, there were widespread shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other emergency supplies. Such shortages led to postponement and cancellation of medical procedures and, in some cases, forced medical professionals to reuse PPE, as demand for the equipment drastically increased across the globe. House Bill 4068 directs the Oregon Homeland Security Council to establish a program to create an Oregon Critical Disaster Preparedness Stockpile. It also directs the Council to coordinate to develop a list of essential equipment and materials, as well as the manufacturing capacity and distribution network for those supplies. The Council is directed to report to legislative committees on efforts taken to establish the stockpile by September 2022. Once this process is completed, the measure directs the Oregon Business Development Department to establish and administer the Oregon Resiliency Partnership Program to ensure the stockpile is maintained.

House Bill 4068 also modifies the membership provisions of the Emergency Preparedness Advisory Council, which is housed within the Office of the Governor, to specify that there should be at least one member of the council with experience or knowledge of each federal emergency support function.

Finally, the measure specifies that, during a declared state of emergency, the Governor is authorized to direct the Oregon Department of Transportation to issue a commercial driver license to individuals experienced in driving an equivalent military motor vehicle. Licenses issued under this authority would remain valid until termination of the emergency.

House Bill 4068 is the emergency management omnibus measure for the 2022 session.