
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7203

AN ACT PERMITTING A CERTAIN COUNCIL TO SERVE AS A SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMISSION ON FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL.

SUMMARY

This bill allows a council that identifies rural fire issues for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) (presumably the Rural Fire Council) to serve as a subcommittee of the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, beginning on July 1, 2026. In its subcommittee role, the council may advise and assist the commission:

1. in the coordination and integration of the state's wildfire mitigation and response strategies with the state's general fire prevention and control strategies;
2. on wildfire risks in rural areas and areas where houses and other development meet or mix with undeveloped natural areas (wildland-urban interface areas);
3. with resources, training, and operational supports needed by rural fire departments to effectively respond to wildfires; and
4. with policy changes, legislative changes, and similar actions needed to protect rural areas from wildfires.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

BACKGROUND

Commission on Fire Prevention and Control

The commission, organized under the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, develops standards for and conducts firefighter training and education. The commission is generally

responsible for reducing the effects of fire and disasters on state residents, and seeks to do so through its educational programs, certifications, and provision of resources to fire service personnel, public educators, and other first responders.

Rural Fire Council

This council identifies rural fire issues, reviews DEEP forest and fire programs to see how they impact rural issues, suggests fire program changes, and acts as a conduit between DEEP's fire program and fire chiefs. It consists of representatives from each county.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 29 Nay 0 (03/18/2025)