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SB-209 Office of Emergency Services: Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center.
(2019-2020)

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Senate Bill No. 209

CHAPTER 405

An act to add Section 8586.7 to the Government Code, relating to wildfires.

[Approved by Governor October 02, 2019. Filed with Secretary of State October 02, 2019.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 209, Dodd. Office of Emergency Services: Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center.

Existing law establishes, within the office of the Governor, the Office of Emergency Services, under the direction of the Director of Emergency Services. Among other things, existing law requires the office to establish and lead the California Cybersecurity Integration Center (Cal-CSIC) comprised of representatives of specified state and federal agencies and with a primary mission of reducing the likelihood and severity of cyber incidents that could damage California's economy, its critical infrastructure, or public and private sector computer networks.

This bill would require the office and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to jointly establish and lead the Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center, comprised of representatives from specified state and other entities. The bill would require the center to serve as the state's integrated central organizing hub for wildfire forecasting, weather information, and threat intelligence gathering, analysis, and dissemination and to coordinate wildfire threat intelligence and data sharing, as provided. The bill would also require the center to, among other things, develop a statewide wildfire forecast and threat intelligence strategy, as provided, and protect and safeguard sensitive information. The bill would make various findings and declarations in this regard.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

- (a) Catastrophic wildfires pose an urgent threat to lives, property, and resources in California.
- (b) Fifteen of the 20 most destructive wildfires in California history have occurred since 2000, and 10 of the most destructive fires have occurred since 2015.
- (c) The escalating frequency and devastation caused by wildfires demand heightened levels of coordination, intelligence sharing, and utilization of technologies among agencies and organizations to monitor wildfire weather conditions and assess wildfire risk in order to protect lives and property from the effects of wildfires.

(d) Investor-owned utilities are likely to increase the use of public safety power shutoffs throughout the state, precipitating the need for state and local governments to prepare for and manage the cascading effects of deenergization activities.

(e) The California Emergency Services Act (Chapter 7 (commencing with Section 8550) of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code) authorizes the Governor to take actions to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the effects of natural or human-caused emergencies that endanger life, property, and the state's resources, and further authorizes the Office of Emergency Services, established within the Governor's office, and its director to take actions to coordinate emergency planning, preparedness, and response activities.

SEC. 2. Section 8586.7 is added to the Government Code, to read:

8586.7. (a) (1) The office and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection shall jointly establish and lead the Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center.

(2) The Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center's primary mission shall be to collect, assess, and analyze fire weather data, atmospheric conditions, and other threat indicators that could lead to catastrophic wildfire and to reduce the likelihood and severity of wildfire incidents that could endanger the safety of persons, property, and the environment by developing and sharing intelligence products related to fire weather and fire threat conditions for government decisionmakers.

(3) The Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center shall serve as the state's integrated central organizing hub for wildfire forecasting, weather information, and threat intelligence gathering, analysis, and dissemination, and shall also coordinate wildfire threat intelligence and data sharing among federal, state, and local agencies, tribal governments, utilities, and other service providers, academic institutions, and nongovernmental organizations.

(b) (1) The Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center shall be comprised of representatives from the following organizations:

(A) The Office of Emergency Services.

(B) The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

(C) The Public Utilities Commission.

(D) The Military Department.

(E) The University of California.

(F) The California State University.

(G) The California Utilities Emergency Association.

(H) At least one representative of investor-owned utility companies, appointed by the President of the Public Utilities Commission.

(I) At least one representative of publicly owned utilities, appointed jointly by the Director of Emergency Services and the Director of Forestry and Fire Protection.

(J) Other members as designated jointly by the Director of Emergency Services and the Director of Forestry and Fire Protection.

(2) The office and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection may invite the following organizations to designate representatives to the Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center:

(A) The National Weather Service.

(B) The United States Forest Service.

(c) The Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center shall share intelligence and data relevant to wildfire threat, forecasting, detection, and prevention activities received from utility wildfire and emergency operations centers, partner academic institutions, private companies, and other sources in coordination with all of the following:

(1) The Northern California Geographic Area Coordination Center and the Southern California Geographic Area Coordination Center, inclusive of the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's predictive services unit.

(2) The California Wildland Fire Coordinating Group.

(3) The National Weather Service.

(4) The State Operations Center within the office.

(5) The California State Warning Center within the office.

(d) The Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center shall do all of the following:

(1) Provide intelligence and data in compliance with National Fire Danger Rating System standards and guidelines about wildfire threats to government agencies and designated alerting authorities, as that term is defined in paragraph (1) of subdivision (g) of Section 8594.16.

(2) Develop intelligence products for use by public and private sector entities engaged in wildfire risk mitigation efforts.

(e) The Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center shall develop a statewide wildfire forecast and threat intelligence strategy to improve how wildfire threats are identified, understood, and shared in order to reduce threats to California government, businesses, and consumers. The strategy shall strengthen wildfire emergency preparedness and response, standardize the implementation of environmental monitoring and assessment, enhance forecasting and detection capabilities, maximize the use of science and technology, and expand public knowledge and awareness of wildfire risks.

(f) The Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center shall be a signatory to the interagency California Fire Weather Annual Operating Plan.

(g) Information sharing by the Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center shall be conducted in a manner that protects and safeguards sensitive information, preserves business confidentiality, and enables public officials to detect, investigate, respond to, prevent, and recover from catastrophic wildfires that threaten public health and safety and economic stability.