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AB-588 State Fire Marshal: lithium battery working group: membership: funding. (2025-2026)

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Date Published: 04/21/2025 09:00 PM

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 21, 2025

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 09, 2025

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 19, 2025

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2025–2026 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

NO. 588

Introduced by Assembly Member Patel

February 12, 2025

An act to amend Section 18931.7 of, and to add Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 13270) to Part 2 of Division 12 of, the Health and Safety Code, relating to fire safety, and making an appropriation therefor.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 588, as amended, Patel. State Fire Marshal: lithium battery working group: membership: funding.

Existing law requires the State Fire Marshal, commencing January 1, 2026, to adopt regulations that promote the fire and electrical safety of electric bicycles, powered mobility devices, and storage batteries, as specified. Existing law defines storage batteries for these purposes to include lithium batteries, as provided.

This bill would require the Office of the State Fire Marshal to convene a lithium battery working group, composed of specified members selected by the State Fire Marshal, to identify those safety issues associated with lithium batteries and associated charging infrastructure installed or used near or within residential or commercial occupancies that have not already been addressed in the 2025 Edition of the California Building Standards Code, and to recommend potential solutions that will enhance building safety for the State Fire Marshal and other impacted agencies to consider, as provided. The bill would require the working group to deliver the initial research, findings, and recommendations on or before January 1, 2027.

Existing law establishes the Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund in the State Treasury. Existing law provides that moneys in the fund, which include building permit applicant fees, shall be available, upon appropriation, to the Office of the State Fire Marshal, among other state entities, for expenditure in carrying out various provisions relating to building and housing standards, as provided.

This bill would make moneys in the Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund available, upon appropriation, to support the working group. The bill would also appropriate an unspecified amount from the fund for specified purposes related to

addressing building safety concerns associated with lithium batteries and associated charging infrastructure being installed or used near or within residential or commercial occupancies.

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

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 13270) is added to Part 2 of Division 12 of the Health and Safety Code, to read:

CHAPTER 9. Lithium Battery Safety Working Group

13270. (a) The Office of the State Fire Marshal shall convene a lithium battery working group to identify those safety issues associated with lithium batteries and associated charging infrastructure installed or used near or within residential or commercial occupancies that have not already been addressed in the 2025 Edition of the California Building Standards Code, and shall recommend potential solutions that will enhance building safety for the State Fire Marshal and other impacted agencies to consider. These recommendations may include any of the following:

- (1) Informational bulletins.
- (2) Guidance documents outlining best practices.
- (3) Educational and training materials.
- (4) Voluntary and mandatory building standards.

(b) The working group shall include the State Fire Marshal and shall also include, but not necessarily be limited to, representatives from the following groups and sectors, as selected by the State Fire Marshal:

- (1) One representative from the Fire Districts Association of California.
- (2) One representative from the California Fire Chiefs Association.
- (3) Two representatives from the California Professional Firefighters.
- (4) The California Building Standards Commission.
- (5) (A) One professor with academic expertise in lithium battery chemistry.

(B) The State Fire Marshal shall first attempt to select a professor from the University of California who meets the qualifications in subparagraph (A). If the State Fire Marshal is unable to select a University of California professor who meets the qualifications in subparagraph (A), the State Fire Marshal may appoint a professor from another institution who meets the qualifications in subparagraph (A).

- (6) Local building departments.
- (7) Fire safety consultants.
- (8) Parking facility owners, which may include owners of facilities that are stand-alone or that are attached to another use.
- (9) Commercial property owners.
- (10) Apartment owners.

(11) One licensed electrical contractor.

(12) One electrician with Energy Storage and Microgrid Training and Certification.

(c) The working group shall establish a clear timeline to guide the initial research, findings, and recommendations, and deliver the initial research, findings, and recommendations on or before January 1, 2027.

(d) The sum of ____ dollars (\$____) is hereby appropriated from the Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund established pursuant to Section 18931.7 to the Office of the State Fire Marshal. These funds shall be used for the following purposes related to addressing building safety concerns associated with lithium batteries and associated charging infrastructure being installed or used near or within residential or commercial occupancies:

- (1) Paying the operational costs of the working group.

(2) Conducting research related to the working group.

(3) Developing and publishing guidance documents.

(4) Creating educational and training materials.

(5) Formulating potential building standards related to lithium battery safety.

(6) Identifying practical, cost-effective solutions to reduce or mitigate risks unique to lithium battery fires.

SEC. 2. Section 18931.7 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

18931.7. (a) All funds received by the commission under this part shall be deposited in the Building Standards Administration Special Revolving Fund, which is hereby established in the State Treasury.

(b) Moneys deposited in the fund shall be available, upon appropriation, to the commission, the department, and the Office of the State Fire Marshal for expenditure in carrying out this part, the provisions of Part 1.5 (commencing with Section 17910) that relate to building standards, as defined in Section 18909, and the requirements in Section 13159.5 of this code and subdivision (d) of Section 51189 of the Government Code, with emphasis placed on the development, adoption, publication, and updating of green building standards, the updating of verification guidelines for Tier 1 or Tier 2 green building standards and educational efforts, including, but not limited to, training for local building officials associated with green building standards, and to the Office of the State Fire Marshal to carry out the provisions of Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 13270) of Part 2 of Division 12.

(c) The funds appropriated pursuant to Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 13270) of Part 2 of Division 12 shall be used to support the lithium battery working group described in that chapter.