

BILL SUMMARY

“An act relating to natural disaster government response, recovery, and resiliency”

Part 1. Creation of the Community Resilience and Disaster Mitigation Fund (Secs. 1-4)

This bill incorporates all sections of [S.145](#) (an act relating to the Community Resilience and Disaster Mitigation Fund), except for the findings. These sections create a Community Resilience and Disaster Mitigation Grant Program, administered by the Department of Public Safety, funded by an annual assessment of \$4,300,000 on insurance companies writing disaster-related policies, and to award grants for municipal disaster mitigation projects. A \$15,000,000 appropriation will initially fill the fund.

Part 2. Emergency Management Personnel (Secs. 5-7)

This bill incorporates all sections of [S.250](#) (an act relating to emergency management personnel). These sections create a definition of “emergency management personnel” to include public works personnel, who will be treated akin to traditional emergency-oriented professions, like firefighters and police, for the purposes of emergency response.

Part 3. Municipal Stormwater Utilities (Secs. 8-10)

This bill incorporates elements of [S.243](#) (an act relating to the formation of stormwater utility districts). These sections modify how stormwater rates are assessed and how the associated revenue may be used. Sewage system commissioners may now set stormwater rates for equivalent residential units based on an average area of impervious surface on residential property within the municipality. Revenues may be used for stormwater management, control, and treatment; flood resiliency; floodplain restoration; and other similar measures. These sections also permit municipalities to jointly apply for grants from the Agency of Natural Resources to support stormwater utility operations.

Part 4. Creation of the Urban Search and Rescue Team (Sec. 11)

This bill incorporates Sec. 6 of [H.627](#) (an act relating to emergency preparedness and hazard response). This section will create the *Urban* Search and Rescue Team within the Department of Public Safety.

Part 5. Vermont-211 Information Privacy (Sec. 12)

This section requires Vermont 211 to keep confidential any personal information acquired from victims of natural disasters except for coordinating relief work for affected individuals.

Part 6. Reverse E-911 Policy (Sec. 13)

This section requires the Enhanced E-911 Board to develop a policy using E-911 to provide more effective VT-Alerts in large emergencies.

Part 7. Vermont Emergency Management Division (Secs. 14-16)

This bill incorporates Secs. 14, 15, and 18 of [H.723](#) (an act relating to flood recovery), and all of [S. 223](#) (an act relating to the assessment of the Vermont Emergency Management Division’s

disaster preparedness). These sections require the Department of Public Safety's Division of Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) to review the adequacy of (1) early warning and evacuation orders; (2) designated evacuation routes and emergency shelters; (3) the present system of local emergency management directors in wide-spread emergencies; and (4) the State's present emergency communications systems.

VEM will publish best management practices for rebuilding after emergencies and report back to both the House and Senate Committees on Government Operations on both the outcome of the review and the best management practices. VEM will also publish best management practices for the placement and funding of local emergency shelters.

VEM will be required to ensure interpretation services are being provided to individuals who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind for all State emergency communications.

Part 8. Creation of Chief Climate Resilience Officer (Sec. 17)

This section creates a Chief Climate Resilience Officer in the Department of Public Safety.

Part 9. Post-Secondary Disaster Management Programs (Sec. 18)

This section will require the Vermont State University and the President or designee for the University of Vermont report on potentially creating post-secondary disaster management programs.

Part 11. Effective Date (Sec. 19)

This act shall take effect on passage.