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SENATE BILL NO. 1325

Offered January 12, 2025

Prefiled January 12, 2025

A BILL to direct the Department of Emergency Management to convene work groups to (i) study the reliance of the Commonwealth and its localities on federal grants for core emergency management functions, (ii) study and develop a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework to take effect during a disaster for which a state of emergency has been declared, and (iii) study and develop solutions to address breaks in technology continuity among communities across the Commonwealth during emergencies; report.

Patron—Roem

Referred to Committee on Rules

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *The Department of Emergency Management (the Department) shall convene a work group to study the reliance of the Commonwealth and its localities on federal grants for core emergency management functions. In conducting its study, the work group shall include consideration of the extent to which essential systems, such as WebEOC and Crisis Track, are funded by such grants, and the feasibility of establishing dedicated, stable funding mechanisms at the state and local levels to reduce reliance on variable grant funding. The work group shall consist of pertinent Department staff and representatives from (i) the Virginia Association of Counties, (ii) the Virginia Municipal League, and (iii) the Virginia Emergency Management Association. The work group shall complete its work and report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly no later than November 30, 2025.*

§ 2. *The Department of Emergency Management shall convene a work group to study and recommend a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework to take effect during a disaster for which a state of emergency has been declared. The study shall consider, among other things, including in such framework pre-drafted executive orders, temporary waivers, and other regulatory adjustments that may be quickly enacted during the disaster and may consist of various levels or phases that reflect the length, impact, and type of disaster. The work group shall consist of representatives from the Department of Health, the Department of Health Professions, the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation, the Department of Labor and Industry, and such other relevant stakeholders as determined by the Department. The work group shall complete its work and report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly no later than November 30, 2025.*

§3. *The Department of Emergency Management and the Virginia Information Technologies Agency shall convene a work group to study and develop solutions to address breaks in technology continuity among communities across the Commonwealth during emergencies. In conducting its study, the work group shall review the feasibility of solutions involving the integration of innovative solutions to address such breaks in technology continuity into emergency plans to ensure effective communication and coordination during emergencies. The work group shall complete its work and report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly no later than November 30, 2025.*