

SENATE THIRD READING
SB 668 (Rubio)
As Amended August 25, 2020
Majority vote

SUMMARY:

Expands the number of water agencies required to review and revise disaster preparedness plans.

Major Provisions

- 1) Changes the requirement for water agencies having to comply with the disaster preparedness plans from "public water systems" (10,000 or more service connections) to "urban water suppliers" (3,000 or more customers or supply more than 3,000 acre-feet of water annually).
- 2) Requires urban water suppliers to review and revise their disaster preparedness plans every five years.
- 3) Requires urban water supplies to furnish an assessment of its emergency response and make recommendations to the Legislature following a declared state of emergency.
- 4) Requires the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to coordinate with urban water suppliers in the development of response, recovery and mutual aid plans.

COMMENTS:

Background: The California Emergency Services Act, among other things, requires all public water systems with 10,000 or more service connections to review and revise their disaster preparedness plans to ensure that the plans are sufficient to address possible disaster scenarios. These plans must examine and review pumping station and distribution facility operations during an emergency, water pressure at both pumping stations and hydrants, and whether there is sufficient water reserve levels and alternative emergency power.

Urban Water Supplier: This bill would expand the number of water agencies needing to review and revise disaster preparedness plans from those with 10,000 or more service connections to those with 3,000 customers or supplying more than 3,000 acre-feet a year.

Federal Requirements: The America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA), which amended the Safe Drinking Water Act, requires community water systems serving more than 3,300 persons to develop or update risk and resilience assessments and emergency response plans.

Emergency Response Plans: AWIA also requires local water systems to certify an emergency response plan to the EPA that incorporates the findings of the assessment. Under the law, emergency plans must include, among other things, strategies and resources to improve the resilience of the system and plans and procedures that can be implemented, and identification of equipment that can be utilized, in the event of a malevolent act or natural hazard that threatens the ability of the community water system to deliver safe drinking water.

According to the Author:

Protecting public health is the primary goal of community drinking water systems, and having an up-to date and workable disaster preparedness plan helps achieve this goal in any crisis situation.

In an emergency, the time constraints imposed on public water suppliers, coupled with difficult terrain, closed roads and highways, and overall safety considerations, all require preparedness and planning.

Arguments in Support:

The California Water Association states, "This bill will ensure that all water providers in the State of California are prepared for disasters events, including wildfires."

Arguments in Opposition:

None.

FISCAL COMMENTS:

According to the Assembly Committee on Appropriations, "Unknown, but possibly significant costs of up to \$500,000 General FUND ongoing for the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to review disaster preparedness plans. This bill expands the universe of affected water suppliers subject to disaster planning requirements. As a result, Cal OES is likely to experience an increased workload related to outreach and questions from affected water suppliers. Unknown costs for urban water suppliers to comply with new disaster preparedness planning requirements. To the extent that the Commission on State Mandates determines that the provisions of this bill create a new program or impose a higher level of service on local agencies, local agencies could claim reimbursement of those costs."

VOTES:**SENATE FLOOR: 38-0-0**

YES: Allen, Archuleta, Atkins, Bates, Beall, Borgeas, Bradford, Caballero, Chang, Dodd, Durazo, Galgiani, Glazer, Grove, Hertzberg, Hill, Hueso, Hurtado, Jackson, Jones, Leyva, McGuire, Mitchell, Monning, Moorlach, Morrell, Nielsen, Pan, Portantino, Roth, Rubio, Skinner, Stern, Stone, Umberg, Wieckowski, Wiener, Wilk

ASM GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION: 19-0-2

YES: Gray, Bigelow, Aguiar-Curry, Berman, Bonta, Brough, Cooley, Cooper, Daly, Gallagher, Gipson, Jones-Sawyer, Lackey, Mathis, Melendez, Quirk-Silva, Robert Rivas, Blanca Rubio, Salas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Eduardo Garcia, Low

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 18-0-0

YES: Gonzalez, Bigelow, Bloom, Bonta, Brough, Calderon, Carrillo, Chau, Diep, Eggman, Fong, Gabriel, Eduardo Garcia, Maienschein, Obernolte, Petrie-Norris, Quirk, Robert Rivas

UPDATED:

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