

HOUSE BILL NO. 46

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE DAVIES

Introduced: 1/19/99

Referred: House Special Committee on Military and Veterans' Affairs, State Affairs, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act establishing the Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission."

2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

3 * Section 1. FINDINGS. The legislature finds that

4 (1) although the state has made significant improvements in disaster
5 preparedness since the great earthquake of 1964, there has been little corresponding
6 improvement in measures to reduce the disaster potential of major earthquakes and,
7 consequently, to reduce dependence on disaster relief;

8 (2) there is a pressing need to provide a consistent policy framework and a
9 means for continuing coordination of programs and public safety practices related to seismic
10 hazards at all governmental levels and in the private sector; this need is not being addressed
11 by any continuing state government organization;

12 (3) through concerted efforts coordinated by a Seismic Hazards Safety
13 Commission, the state can make long-term progress toward mitigating the effects of seismic
14 hazards on persons and property, thereby reducing the costs of responding to and recovering
15 from major earthquakes.

1 * **Sec. 2.** AS 44.19 is amended by adding new sections to read:

2 **Article 13. Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission.**

3 **Sec. 44.19.635. Commission established; membership.** (a) The Alaska
4 Seismic Hazards Safety Commission is established in the Office of the Governor. The
5 Office of the Governor shall provide staff support to the commission.

6 (b) The commission is composed of nine members appointed by the governor
7 for terms of three years. A member holds office until a successor is appointed. A
8 vacancy is filled for the unexpired term.

9 (c) The governor shall appoint to the commission

10 (1) a representative from the University of Alaska;

11 (2) a representative from local government;

12 (3) a representative from the Department of Natural Resources;

13 (4) a representative from the Department of Military and Veterans'
14 Affairs;

15 (5) a representative from an appropriate federal agency; and

16 (6) four members from members of the public who are knowledgeable
17 in the fields of geology, seismology, hydrology, geotechnical engineering, structural
18 engineering, emergency services, or planning.

19 (d) The commission shall elect annually from its members a chair and vice-
20 chair. A majority of the commission may vote to replace an officer of the
21 commission.

22 (e) Six members constitute a quorum.

23 (f) Members of the Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission serve without
24 compensation but are entitled to per diem and travel expenses authorized for boards
25 and commissions under AS 39.20.180.

26 **Sec. 44.19.637. Powers and duties.** (a) The commission shall

27 (1) recommend goals and priorities for seismic hazard mitigation to the
28 public and private sectors;

29 (2) recommend policies to the governor and the legislature, including
30 needed research, mapping, and monitoring programs;

31 (3) offer advice on coordinating disaster preparedness and seismic

1 hazard mitigation activities of government at all levels, review the practices for
 2 recovery and reconstruction after a major earthquake, and recommend improvements
 3 to mitigate losses from similar future events;

4 (4) gather, analyze, and disseminate information of general interest on
 5 seismic hazard mitigation;

6 (5) establish and maintain necessary working relationships with other
 7 public and private agencies;

8 (6) review predictions and warnings issued by the federal government,
 9 research institutions, and other organizations and persons and suggest appropriate
 10 responses at the state and local levels; and

11 (7) review proposed seismic hazard notifications and supporting
 12 information from state agencies, evaluate possible socioeconomic consequences,
 13 recommend that the governor issue formal seismic hazard notifications when
 14 appropriate, and advise state and local agencies of appropriate responses.

15 (b) The commission may

16 (1) advise the governor and the legislature on disaster preparedness and
 17 seismic hazard mitigation and on budgets for those activities and may recommend
 18 legislation or policies to improve disaster preparedness or seismic hazard mitigation;

19 (2) conduct public hearings;

20 (3) appoint committees from its membership and appoint external
 21 advisory committees of ex-officio members; and

22 (4) accept grants, contributions, and appropriations from public
 23 agencies, private foundations, and individuals.

24 **Sec. 44.19.639. Definitions.** In AS 44.19.635 - 44.19.639,

25 (1) "commission" means the Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety
 26 Commission;

27 (2) "disaster preparedness" means establishing plans and programs for
 28 responding to and distributing funds to alleviate losses from a disaster as defined in
 29 AS 26.23.900;

30 (3) "seismic hazard mitigation" or "mitigation" mean activities that
 31 prevent or alleviate the harmful effects of seismic hazards to persons and property,

1 including identification and evaluation of the seismic hazards, assessment of the risks,
2 and implementation of measures to reduce potential losses before a damaging event
3 occurs.

4 * **Sec. 3.** AS 44.66.010(a) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

5 (20) Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission (AS 44.19.635) --
6 June 30, 2003.

7 * **Sec. 4.** INITIAL TERMS. Notwithstanding AS 44.19.635, enacted by sec. 2 of this Act,
8 three initial members of the Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission shall serve terms of
9 two years, and three initial members shall serve terms of four years.

10 * **Sec. 5.** CONSTRUCTION. This Act is not intended to transfer to the Alaska Seismic
11 Hazards Safety Commission the authorities and responsibilities of other state agencies, boards,
12 councils, or commissions or of local governments.