

**HOUSE BILL NO. 53**

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

**BY REPRESENTATIVES DAVIES, Hudson, Kerttula, Green**

**Introduced: 1/10/01**

**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.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section  
4 to read:

5 FINDINGS. The legislature finds that

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

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

14 (3) through concerted efforts coordinated by a Seismic Hazards Safety  
15 Commission, the state can make long-term progress toward mitigating the effects of seismic

1 hazards on persons and property, thereby reducing the costs of responding to and recovering  
2 from major earthquakes.

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

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

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

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

11 (c) The governor shall appoint to the commission

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

13 (2) a representative from local government;

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

15 (4) a representative from the Department of Military and Veterans'  
16 Affairs;

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

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

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

24 (e) Six members constitute a quorum.

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

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

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

31 (2) recommend policies to the governor and the legislature, including

1 needed research, mapping, and monitoring programs;

2 (3) offer advice on coordinating disaster preparedness and seismic  
3 hazard mitigation activities of government at all levels, review the practices for  
4 recovery and reconstruction after a major earthquake, and recommend improvements  
5 to mitigate losses from similar future events;

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

8 (5) establish and maintain necessary working relationships with other  
9 public and private agencies;

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

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

17 (b) The commission may

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

21 (2) conduct public hearings;

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

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

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

27 (1) "commission" means the Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety  
28 Commission;

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

1                   (3) "seismic hazard mitigation" or "mitigation" mean activities that  
2 prevent or alleviate the harmful effects of seismic hazards to persons and property,  
3 including identification and evaluation of the seismic hazards, assessment of the risks,  
4 and implementation of measures to reduce potential losses before a damaging event  
5 occurs.

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

7                   (20) Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission (AS 44.19.635) --  
8 June 30, 2005.

9 \* **Sec. 4.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
10 read:

11                INITIAL TERMS. Notwithstanding AS 44.19.635, enacted by sec. 2 of this Act, three  
12 initial members of the Alaska Seismic Hazards Safety Commission shall serve terms of two  
13 years, and three initial members shall serve terms of four years.

14 \* **Sec. 5.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to  
15 read:

16                CONSTRUCTION. This Act is not intended to transfer to the Alaska Seismic  
17 Hazards Safety Commission the authorities and responsibilities of other state agencies,  
18 boards, councils, or commissions or of local governments.