
DIGEST

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HB 524 Engrossed

2022 Regular Session

Lyons

Abstract: Creates the Disability-Focused Disaster Preparedness and Response Fund and a program of needs assessment and services for people with disabilities affected by disasters.

Present law provides that 2% percent of the monies collected annually from the tax upon gaming proceeds from sports wagering established by present law, not to exceed \$500,000, shall be credited to the Disability Affairs Trust Fund.

Proposed law revises present law to dedicate this revenue instead to the Disability-Focused Disaster Preparedness and Response Fund, a special fund created by proposed law. Provides that the monies in the Disability-Focused Disaster Preparedness and Response Fund shall be used solely for the purposes provided for in proposed law.

Proposed law provides that its purpose is to address particular identified needs of people with disabilities affected by disasters through needs assessment, coordination of resources to meet those needs, and training of personnel to identify needs through appropriate methods and to proficiently coordinate with the proper entities that provide necessary services, thereby establishing a network that will identify people who need disability-related resources in disaster periods and ensure that those who need help will be connected to those who can provide help.

Proposed law requires the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) to contract with a disability assessment and coordination entity (DACE). Provides that the DACE shall perform all of the following functions:

- (1) Work with GOHSEP to develop a statewide plan which shall include but not be limited to all of the following elements:
 - (a) Conduct individual assessments of needs of people with disabilities in shelters and areas impacted by disasters.
 - (b) Provide training that addresses meeting the needs of people with disabilities impacted by disasters to disability stakeholders, other entities that serve people with disabilities, and government agencies.
 - (c) Enhance cooperation between the entities identified in paragraph (b) above so that the needs of people with disabilities relating to disaster preparedness and response will be met.

- (d) Where necessary, directly meet the needs of people with disabilities impacted by disasters.
- (2) Administer the initial implementation of the statewide plan.
- (3) Administer the statewide plan on an ongoing basis.
- (4) Conduct individual needs assessments for people with disabilities.
- (5) Coordinate with state and local governmental entities, disability stakeholders, and affected individuals with disabilities or their representatives to meet individual needs identified in assessments.
- (6) Directly meet the needs of people with disabilities impacted by disasters in instances in which no other option for furnishing of such assistance is available.
- (7) Provide necessary training.
- (8) Maintain staffing necessary to administer the statewide plan.
- (9) Collect data relative to the activities conducted pursuant to proposed law and provide an annual report to GOHSEP.

Proposed law sets forth minimum qualifications that the director of the DACE must possess.

Proposed law requires GOHSEP to seek federal reimbursement for eligible disaster-related expenses incurred in the provision of resources and services to people with disabilities affected by disasters as authorized by the provisions of this Section. Authorizes GOHSEP to enter into any type of agreement with the DACE as necessary for the purpose of securing federal reimbursement for eligible disaster-related expenses.

Proposed law authorizes GOHSEP to utilize no more than 3% of the monies annually deposited into the Disability-Focused Disaster Preparedness and Response Fund pursuant to proposed law for administrative costs, including costs of grant administration.

(Amends R.S. 27:625(G)(5) and R.S. 29:726.6(Section heading); Adds R.S. 29:726.7)