

By Senator Cruz

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the state emergency communications
3 and warning system; amending s. 252.35, F.S.;
4 requiring the Division of Emergency Management to
5 include a qualified interpreter in emergency
6 broadcasts; defining the term "qualified interpreter";
7 providing an effective date.

8
9 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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11 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section
12 252.35, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

13 252.35 Emergency management powers; Division of Emergency
14 Management.—

15 (2) The division is responsible for carrying out the
16 provisions of ss. 252.31-252.90. In performing its duties, the
17 division shall:

18 (a) Prepare a state comprehensive emergency management
19 plan, which shall be integrated into and coordinated with the
20 emergency management plans and programs of the Federal
21 Government. The division must adopt the plan as a rule in
22 accordance with chapter 120. The plan shall be implemented by a
23 continuous, integrated comprehensive emergency management
24 program. The plan must contain provisions to ensure that the
25 state is prepared for emergencies and minor, major, and
26 catastrophic disasters, and the division shall work closely with
27 local governments and agencies and organizations with emergency
28 management responsibilities in preparing and maintaining the
29 plan. The state comprehensive emergency management plan shall be

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30 operations oriented and:

31 1. Include an evacuation component that includes specific
32 regional and interregional planning provisions and promotes
33 intergovernmental coordination of evacuation activities. This
34 component must, at a minimum: contain guidelines for lifting
35 tolls on state highways; ensure coordination pertaining to
36 evacuees crossing county lines; set forth procedures for
37 directing people caught on evacuation routes to safe shelter;
38 establish strategies for ensuring sufficient, reasonably priced
39 fueling locations along evacuation routes; and establish
40 policies and strategies for emergency medical evacuations.

41 2. Include a shelter component that includes specific
42 regional and interregional planning provisions and promotes
43 coordination of shelter activities between the public, private,
44 and nonprofit sectors. This component must, at a minimum:
45 contain strategies to ensure the availability of adequate public
46 shelter space in each region of the state; establish strategies
47 for refuge-of-last-resort programs; provide strategies to assist
48 local emergency management efforts to ensure that adequate
49 staffing plans exist for all shelters, including medical and
50 security personnel; provide for a postdisaster communications
51 system for public shelters; establish model shelter guidelines
52 for operations, registration, inventory, power generation
53 capability, information management, and staffing; and set forth
54 policy guidance for sheltering people with special needs.

55 3. Include a postdisaster response and recovery component
56 that includes specific regional and interregional planning
57 provisions and promotes intergovernmental coordination of
58 postdisaster response and recovery activities. This component

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59 must provide for postdisaster response and recovery strategies
60 according to whether a disaster is minor, major, or
61 catastrophic. The postdisaster response and recovery component
62 must, at a minimum: establish the structure of the state's
63 postdisaster response and recovery organization; establish
64 procedures for activating the state's plan; set forth policies
65 used to guide postdisaster response and recovery activities;
66 describe the chain of command during the postdisaster response
67 and recovery period; describe initial and continuous
68 postdisaster response and recovery actions; identify the roles
69 and responsibilities of each involved agency and organization;
70 provide for a comprehensive communications plan; establish
71 procedures for monitoring mutual aid agreements; provide for
72 rapid impact assessment teams; ensure the availability of an
73 effective statewide urban search and rescue program coordinated
74 with the fire services; ensure the existence of a comprehensive
75 statewide medical care and relief plan administered by the
76 Department of Health; and establish systems for coordinating
77 volunteers and accepting and distributing donated funds and
78 goods.

79 4. Include additional provisions addressing aspects of
80 preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation as determined
81 necessary by the division.

82 5. Address the need for coordinated and expeditious
83 deployment of state resources, including the Florida National
84 Guard. In the case of an imminent major disaster, procedures
85 should address predeployment of the Florida National Guard, and,
86 in the case of an imminent catastrophic disaster, procedures
87 should address predeployment of the Florida National Guard and

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88 the United States Armed Forces.

89 6. Establish a system of communications and warning to
90 ensure that the state's population and emergency management
91 agencies are warned of developing emergency situations and can
92 communicate emergency response decisions. Such system shall
93 require that a qualified interpreter is included in any
94 televised broadcast of a developing emergency. As used in this
95 subparagraph, the term "qualified interpreter" means a person
96 who is certified by the National Registry of Interpreters for
97 the Deaf or the Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

98 7. Establish guidelines and schedules for annual exercises
99 that evaluate the ability of the state and its political
100 subdivisions to respond to minor, major, and catastrophic
101 disasters and support local emergency management agencies. Such
102 exercises shall be coordinated with local governments and, to
103 the extent possible, the Federal Government.

104 8. Assign lead and support responsibilities to state
105 agencies and personnel for emergency support functions and other
106 support activities.

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108 The complete state comprehensive emergency management plan shall
109 be submitted to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the
110 House of Representatives, and the Governor on February 1 of
111 every even-numbered year.

112 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.