

Comment Report

SF 352

A bill for an act relating to emergency management services and emergency medical services and including applicability provisions.(Formerly SF 41; See SF 570, SF 2426.)

Subcommittee Members: Klimesh-CH, Dawson, Winckler

Date: 03/15/2023

Time: 08:30 AM

Location: Senate Lounge

Name: Robert Kempf

Comment: As the Coordinator of the Adair & Guthrie County Emergency Management Agency and President of the Iowa Emergency Management Association, I would like to take a second and address SF 352. I encourage your support of this bill as it offers a solution to a nearly 40year problem. Despite posturing by some groups and other elected officials, this is NOT a new tax. The bill simply and clearly communicates the intended authority already provided under law. The bill designates the emergency management commissions as a levy authority in tandem with being a budget certifying authority. It also provides true transparency to the public in emergency management funding for the first time by removing a funding source hidden within the countys general or supplemental levy. This is all to address a nearly fourdecade long battle that has occurred in some counties regarding who has the final decision over funding the emergency management commission budget.The bill sets a reasonable and respectable levy and reserve revenue limits that will allow emergency management commissions to accomplish the missions approved by the entire commission and not just one jurisdiction. The missions of local emergency management commissions are critical to the safety and security of our states residents, businesses, and jurisdictions.As you are all aware, Iowans have lost lives and lost billions of dollars in events such as the 2008 Tornadoes and Flooding, the 2011 500year Flooding, 2012 Drought, 2014 Tornado & Flooding, 2015 Windstorm & Flooding, 2017 TORNADOS, 2019 Flooding, 2020 Pandemic, the 2020 Derecho, the Tornadoes of December 2021, the 2022 Madison County tornado, and numerous other major events and emergencies that have impacted our state. Our work and the sustainability of local emergency management are critical with Iowa being the fourth most impacted state from disasters in the entire nation.Most local Emergency Management Commissions in the State of Iowa have great relationships with all the jurisdictions in their counties. If not appropriately corrected, the outcome of trying to fix this issue in the few counties that cannot seem to work together on funding could have consequences at the local level.Please help local emergency management retain the ability for all chief elected officials in the county, not just one individual jurisdiction, to work together when setting the countywide priorities for emergencies and disasters.I would be more than happy to discuss this or any emergency management issue with you at any time.