

By Senator McClain

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A bill to be entitled
An act relating to alternative sources of weather
information; amending s. 252.35, F.S.; revising the
requirements of the state comprehensive emergency plan
to include the evaluation of the integration of
supplemental weather observational data and advanced
forecasting products and the effects on specified
areas; creating s. 252.396, F.S.; defining the terms
"advanced forecasting products" and "supplemental
weather observational data"; requiring the Division of
Emergency Management to take specified actions to
integrate, evaluate, and promote supplemental weather
observational data and advanced forecasting products
in a certain manner; providing an effective date.

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

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

252.35 Emergency management powers; Division of Emergency
Management.—

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

(a) Prepare a state comprehensive emergency management
plan, which must be integrated into and coordinated with the
emergency management plans and programs of the Federal
Government. The division shall adopt the plan as a rule in
accordance with chapter 120. The plan must be implemented by a

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continuous, integrated comprehensive emergency management program. The plan must contain provisions to ensure that the state is prepared for emergencies and minor, major, and catastrophic disasters, and the division shall work closely with local governments and agencies and organizations with emergency management responsibilities in preparing and maintaining the plan. The state comprehensive emergency management plan must be operations oriented and:

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

2. Include a shelter component that includes specific regional and interregional planning provisions and promotes coordination of shelter activities between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. This component must, at a minimum: contain strategies to ensure the availability of adequate public shelter space in each county; establish strategies for refuge-of-last-resort programs; provide strategies to assist local emergency management efforts to ensure that adequate staffing plans exist for all shelters, including medical and security personnel; provide for a postdisaster communications system for public shelters; establish model shelter guidelines for

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operations, registration, inventory, power generation capability, information management, and staffing; and set forth policy guidance for sheltering people with special needs.

3. Include a postdisaster response and recovery component that includes specific regional and interregional planning provisions and promotes intergovernmental coordination of postdisaster response and recovery activities. This component must provide for postdisaster response and recovery strategies according to whether a disaster is minor, major, or catastrophic. The postdisaster response and recovery component must, at a minimum: establish the structure of the state's postdisaster response and recovery organization; establish procedures for activating the state's plan; set forth policies used to guide postdisaster response and recovery activities; describe the chain of command during the postdisaster response and recovery period; describe initial and continuous postdisaster response and recovery actions; identify the roles and responsibilities of each involved agency and organization; provide for a comprehensive communications plan; establish procedures for coordinating and monitoring statewide mutual aid agreements reimbursable under federal public disaster assistance programs; provide for rapid impact assessment teams; ensure the availability of an effective statewide urban search and rescue program coordinated with the fire services; ensure the existence of a comprehensive statewide medical care and relief plan administered by the Department of Health; and establish systems for coordinating volunteers and accepting and distributing donated funds and goods.

4. Include additional provisions addressing aspects of

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88 preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation as determined
89 necessary by the division.

90 5. Address the need for coordinated and expeditious
91 deployment of state resources, including the Florida National
92 Guard. In the case of an imminent major disaster, procedures
93 should address predeployment of the Florida National Guard, and,
94 in the case of an imminent catastrophic disaster, procedures
95 should address predeployment of the Florida National Guard and
96 the United States Armed Forces.

97 6. Establish a system of communications and warning to
98 ensure that the state's population and emergency management
99 agencies are warned of developing emergency situations,
100 including public health emergencies, and can communicate
101 emergency response decisions.

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

108 8. Assign lead and support responsibilities to state
109 agencies and personnel for emergency support functions and other
110 support activities.

111 9. Include the public health emergency plan developed by
112 the Department of Health pursuant to s. 381.00315.

113 10. Include an update on the status of the emergency
114 management capabilities of the state and its political
115 subdivisions. The update must include the emergency management
116 capabilities related to public health emergencies, as determined

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in collaboration with the Department of Health.

11. Evaluate the integration of supplemental weather data and advanced forecasting products under s. 252.396 and the effects on forecast accuracy, early warning systems, and resilience outcomes.

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

Section 2. Section 252.396, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

252.396 Integration of supplemental weather observational data and advanced forecasting.—

(1) As used in this section the term:

(a) "Advanced forecasting products" means tools, models, or services that provide greater precision, accuracy, and more timely predictions than services offered by the Federal Government.

(b) "Supplemental weather observational data" means meteorological, hydrological, or atmospheric information collected from sources other than the Federal Government.

(2) The division shall, within available resources and in coordination with federal, state, and local partners:

(a) Integrate supplemental weather observation data and advanced forecasting products into emergency management decision making. The division shall identify and prioritize areas where such data and products will most improve forecast accuracy and public safety through partnerships, data sharing, or

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146 infrastructure development.

147 (b) Establish standards to use when evaluating supplemental
148 weather data and procedures for the use of such data for
149 emergency management.

150 (c) Promote the use of supplemental weather data.

151 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.