

HB 1582 -- FIRST INFORMER BROADCASTERS ACT

SPONSOR: Kelley (127)

This bill establishes the First Informer Broadcasters Act that allows broadcasters in Missouri, in cooperation with the State Emergency Management Agency, the Missouri Police Chiefs Association, the Missouri Sheriffs' Association, and the Missouri Broadcasters Association or its successor to develop comprehensive coordinated plans for preparing for and responding to an emergency or disaster.

Any statewide organization or any member of a statewide organization that represents broadcasters or any other provider that uses emerging technologies may establish a program for training and certifying broadcast engineers, technical personnel, and news gathering personnel as first informer broadcasters. Those who complete the program will receive statewide recognized certification.

Each program established by the bill must provide training and education concerning:

- (1) Restoring, repairing, and resupplying any facilities and equipment of a broadcaster in an area affected by an emergency or disaster;
- (2) Coordinating between news gathering personnel and state and local governmental agencies with respect to gathering and dissemination of news and public safety information, warnings, and directions; and
- (3) The personal safety of a first informer broadcaster in an area affected by an emergency or disaster.

The bill requires state and local governmental agencies to allow those certified as first informer broadcasters access to areas affected by emergency or disaster to the extent practicable and consistent with not endangering public safety or inhibiting recovery efforts for the purposes of:

- (1) Restoring, repairing, or resupplying a facility or equipment critical to the ability of a broadcaster to acquire, produce, and transmit essential emergency- or disaster-related public information programming; and
- (2) Obtaining news; information; photographs; and public safety information, warnings, and directions.