Washington State Emergency Management Division

Limited English Proficiency

**LEP Program**
- **Mission**: Improve partnerships between state agencies, local governments, and community stakeholders with the goal of providing emergency preparedness alert and warning capabilities in LEP communities.
- **Origin**:
  - 2014/2015 Easter Washington wildfire season – worst in the state history – LEP communities were the most affected due to absence of LEP Communications Plan.
  - Effect: **SSB5046**
    - Mandates state agencies and local emergency management programs to provide life safety notifications to Limited English Proficiency Populations

- **Basic requirements**
  - To develop and execute communications plan for LEP populations for life and safety messaging during emergencies

- **Legislative intent on life safety messaging**
  - All persons should be informed of emergency notifications, harms, and actions they can take to protect themselves in a manner they can understand.

- **Life Safety Messing**
  - Evacuations, sheltering, sheltering-in-place, facility lockdown, food and water

- **What we have learned thus far from local Emergency Managers**
  - Limited Resources such as funding and personnel damper LEP plan efforts.
  - Attempts at conducting outreach strained by cultural differences or government aversion.

- **Current Projects**
  - AmeriCorps outreach volunteer for Counties
  - Interpreter emergency management awareness Program
  - Collaborative database of translated messaging and information
  - H-2A Guest Worker outreach
  - Monthly Sync/ bi-weekly Emails