

# **One Hundred Eighth Legislature - Second Session - 2024**

## **Introducer's Statement of Intent**

**LB1243**

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**Chairperson: Senator Tom Brewer**

**Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs**

**Date of Hearing: February 22, 2024**

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

Legislative Bill 1243 would codify the Wildland Incident Response Assistance Team (WIRAT). Since 2013, the WIRAT has existed only because of a letter from Nebraska's governor and the subsequent Letter of Agreement entered into by the State Fire Marshall, the Nebraska Forest Service, and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency. The WIRAT provides assistance or guidance to volunteer first responders throughout the state to prevent, control, suppress, or otherwise mitigate a wildland fire as determined by the State Fire Marshall.

Volunteer firefighters are under increasing demands due to the frequency, intensity, and magnitude of wildland and open-field fires which have burned in all regions of the state. The trio of support provided to volunteer firefighters will continue among the State Fire Marshal, the Nebraska Forest Service, the Adjutant General, and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency.

**Principal Introducer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Senator Mike McDonnell**