

HOUSE BILL REPORT

2SHB 2323

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to law enforcement training.

Brief Description: Providing for future law enforcement officers training.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Sterk, Chappell, Thompson, Dellwo, Buck, Hymes, Talcott, Cooke and McMahan).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Law & Justice: 1/24/96, 2/1/96 [DPS];
Appropriations: 2/3/96 [DP2S(w/o sub LJ)].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/8/96, 97-0.
Senate Amended.
House Concurred.
Passed Legislature.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Sheahan, Chairman; Delvin, Vice Chairman; Hickel, Vice Chairman; Dellwo, Ranking Minority Member; Costa, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Campbell; Carrell; Chappell; Cody; Lambert; McMahan; Morris; Murray; Robertson; Smith; Sterk and Veloria.

Staff: Edie Adams (786-7180).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The second substitute bill be substituted therefor and the second substitute bill do pass and do not pass the substitute bill by Committee on Law & Justice. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Huff, Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Pelesky, Ranking Minority Member; H. Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Valle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Beeksma; Brumsickle; Carlson; Chappell; Cooke; Crouse; Dellwo; Dyer; Foreman; Grant; Hargrove; Hickel;

Kessler; Lambert; Linville; McMorris; Poulsen; Reams; Rust; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott and Wolfe.

Staff: Jennifer Priddy (786-7118).

Background: The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission provides training and education programs for law enforcement personnel, including commissioned officers, corrections officers, fire marshals, and prosecuting attorneys. The commission is funded by appropriations from the public safety and education account, and its annual budget is approximately \$5.5 million.

Basic law enforcement officer training is generally required of all full-time commissioned law enforcement employees of the state. The training consists of a 440-hour program covering a wide variety of subjects, including constitutional and criminal law and procedures, criminal investigation, firearms training, and communication and writing skills. The law enforcement training is available only to persons employed as commissioned law enforcement officers and must be commenced within the first six months of employment as a law enforcement officer.

Summary of Bill: The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs is directed to assemble a study group to evaluate and make recommendations to the Legislature, by January 1, 1997, regarding the mission, duties, and administration of the Criminal Justice Training Commission. The study group is to be comprised of 22 members representing law enforcement agencies, local jurisdictions, community colleges and universities, and the Legislature.

The study group's responsibilities include (1) evaluating the desirability and feasibility of providing law enforcement training to pre-employed law enforcement officer applicants; (2) reviewing the adequacy of the basic law enforcement training program; (3) evaluating the status of supervisory, management, and advanced training programs; and (4) making recommendations regarding sources of funding.

The Criminal Justice Training Commission is authorized to provide basic law enforcement training to college students enrolled in criminal justice courses during the summers following the students' junior and senior years, as long as the students bear the full cost of the training.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately. However, section 1, the study group provision, is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Testimony For: (Law & Justice) Currently, only those persons who have already been hired as law enforcement officers may receive law enforcement officer training, and the law enforcement agency must pay the officer's salary while he or she is attending the training program. This system is expensive and inefficient because a high percentage of officers will drop out or will leave and go to work for another law enforcement agency. This makes it difficult for small jurisdictions to compete. Other states have implemented similar programs and found that they are cost-effective and successful. The study group is needed as soon as possible because the training commission is the lifeline of law enforcement agencies. The training program needs to be reevaluated because it has not kept pace with today's criminal justice needs.

(Appropriations) None.

Testimony Against: (Law & Justice) None.

(Appropriations) None.

Testified: (Law & Justice) (Pro) Representative Sterk, prime sponsor; Randy Hamilton, Chehalis Police and Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs; Rob Alderson, Spokane Police Guild; Mike Patrick, Washington State Council of Police Officers; Susan Patrick, Higher Education Coordinating Board; John Wabel, Crown College; and Bill Wiester, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs.

(Appropriations) None.