
SENATE BILL 5602

State of Washington 63rd Legislature 2013 Regular Session

By Senators Bailey, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Schlicher, and Kline

Read first time 02/05/13. Referred to Committee on Health Care .

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a silver alert system; and adding a new
2 chapter to Title 70 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that Washington
5 state's elderly population is growing and the number of individuals
6 with dementia is increasing. The legislature further finds that
7 approximately sixty percent of individuals with dementia will wander at
8 least once and that if not found within twenty-four hours, up to half
9 of wandering seniors with dementia will suffer serious injury or death.
10 The legislature further finds that the state of Washington has a
11 compelling interest in protecting the safety of vulnerable citizens
12 with cognitive impairments. The legislature further finds that
13 creating a public notification system to broadcast information about
14 missing persons with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or other mental
15 disabilities to aid in their safe return, will help prevent unnecessary
16 suffering and death.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
18 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

1 (1) "Law enforcement agency" means the law enforcement agency that
2 has primary jurisdiction for locating the missing senior citizen.

3 (2) "Silver alert" means a quick response system designed to issue
4 and coordinate alerts following the disappearance of a senior citizen
5 aged sixty-five or older, with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease,
6 dementia, or other mental disability.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A law enforcement agency may request a
8 silver alert for a senior citizen over the age of sixty-five when the
9 following conditions apply:

10 (1) The person suffers from a mental impairment verified by written
11 documentation;

12 (2) The request is made within seventy-two hours of the person's
13 disappearance;

14 (3) The disappearance poses a credible threat to the person's
15 health and safety;

16 (4) There is sufficient information to provide the public to assist
17 in locating the person; and

18 (5) A law enforcement investigation has ruled out alternative
19 explanations for the disappearance.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Within existing resources, the Washington
21 state patrol shall develop and implement a plan, commonly known as a
22 "silver alert plan" for voluntary cooperation between local, state,
23 tribal, and other law enforcement agencies, state government agencies,
24 radio and television stations, and cable and satellite systems to
25 enhance the public's ability to assist in recovering senior citizens
26 aged sixty-five or older, with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease,
27 dementia, or other mental disability.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Sections 1 through 4 of this act constitute
29 a new chapter in Title 70 RCW.

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