
HOUSE BILL 1021

State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session

By Representatives Appleton, Orwall, Robinson, Bergquist, Cody, Hudgins, Senn, Santos, and Fey

Prefiled 12/08/14. Read first time 01/12/15. Referred to Committee on Public Safety.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a silver alert system; and adding a
2 new 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
8 at least once and that if not found within twenty-four hours, up to
9 half of wandering seniors with dementia will suffer serious injury or
10 death. The legislature further finds that the state of Washington has
11 a 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
16 unnecessary suffering and death.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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