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HOUSE BILL 1759

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State of Washington                      65th Legislature                      2017 Regular Session

By Representatives Ortiz-Self, Orwall, Gregerson, and Jinkins

Read first time 01/27/17. Referred to Committee on Public Safety.

1            AN ACT Relating to procedures for communicating with crime  
2 victims and survivors of crime victims; adding a new section to  
3 chapter 7.69 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration  
4 date.

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

6            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.**    (1) The department of commerce, through  
7 the office of crime victims advocacy, must convene and coordinate a  
8 work group to examine the practices around the state regarding  
9 notification of family members when a person has died from a  
10 suspected homicide or other criminal means.

11            (2) Membership of the work group must include representatives of  
12 the following:

13            (a) The office of crime victims advocacy;

14            (b) Law enforcement;

15            (c) Coroners and medical examiners;

16            (d) Prosecutors;

17            (e) Chaplain services;

18            (f) Victim support services;

19            (g) A private citizen who has been directly impacted by the  
20 homicide of a family member; and

1 (h) Either through the membership in (a) through (g) of this  
2 subsection, or by additional membership, representatives that work  
3 directly with local victim notification processes in Whatcom county,  
4 Snohomish county, King county, Franklin county, Yakima county, and  
5 Grant county.

6 (3) The work group must meet at least twice, in person, for a  
7 minimum of eight hours total.

8 (4) The work group must:

9 (a) Gather information regarding the various current processes  
10 around the state for family notification of a homicide or death by  
11 other criminal means;

12 (b) Identify gaps, if any, in current local processes for family  
13 notification; and

14 (c) Generate best practices for family notification including,  
15 but not limited to:

16 (i) Identifying who is responsible in a local jurisdiction for  
17 providing notification;

18 (ii) Appropriate timelines for notification;

19 (iii) Alternative processes when a family member is suspected of  
20 causing the death;

21 (iv) Overcoming language barriers in the notification process;

22 (v) Collaboration between law enforcement and victim services  
23 organizations; and

24 (vi) Other best practices recommended by the work group.

25 (5) The work group must compile a report summarizing the  
26 information collected by the work group and its recommendations. The  
27 report must be submitted to the governor and the appropriate  
28 committees of the legislature by December 1, 2017.

29 (6) This section expires December 1, 2018.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 7.69 RCW  
31 to read as follows:

32 When a peace officer responds to a call in which a crime has been  
33 committed and a victim or a survivor of a victim is present at the  
34 scene, or is thereafter interviewed by the officer, the officer must  
35 provide the victim or survivor with information about crime victim  
36 services. At a minimum, the officer must provide the number for a  
37 statewide crime victims service center hotline.

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