

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2506

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness

**Title:** An act relating to the Washington joint analytical center.

**Brief Description:** Creating the Washington joint analytical center.

**Sponsors:** Representative O'Brien.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness: 1/17/08, 1/24/08 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Creates a Washington Joint Analytical Center (WAJAC).
- Appropriates \$4.6 million to the Washington State Patrol to fund the WAJAC.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives O'Brien, Chair; Hurst, Vice Chair; Pearson, Ranking Minority Member; Ross, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Goodman and Kirby.

**Staff:** Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

**Background:**

In 2003 the Washington Joint Analytical Center (WAJAC) was created as a result of the Statewide Integrated Intelligence Proposal (proposal). The proposal was developed by the Governor's Intelligence Subcommittee on Homeland Security in conjunction with the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC), the Washington State Patrol (WSP), and the Seattle division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The proposal was a joint effort to maximize law enforcement efforts to prevent crime, as well as to gather, analyze, and share intelligence information on terrorists and other organized criminal groups located in Washington.

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The WAJAC, located in the Seattle division of the FBI, is comprised of a central anti-terrorism intelligence analytical center and nine regional intelligence groups located through the state. Tips on criminal activity are often received by the WAJAC, the FBI, and various law enforcement agencies via phone and electronic mail. That information is collected, processed, and passed onto the WAJAC. If further analysis or investigation is needed, the WAJAC notifies the appropriate local law enforcement agency if it is a local matter or the FBI if it is a federal issue. The WAJAC maintains a confidential database with all information gathered. However, there is a reciprocal exchange of information collected regarding terrorists and other organized criminal groups among the law enforcement agencies participating in the WAJAC.

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### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The WAJAC is created and is responsible for the following:

- serving as the state's central center for all terrorism-related information;
- working cooperatively with the WASPC in order to collect and analyze information to develop actionable intelligence;
- creating and maintaining seamless and ongoing partnerships with federal, state, local, and tribal agencies, as well as private entities; and
- working cooperatively with the WASPC in order to increase better information interchange between local, state, and federal law enforcement and criminal justice agencies.

A board of law enforcement executives, appointed by the executive board of the WASPC must govern the WAJAC and administrative support for the WAJAC must be provided by the WSP.

An appropriation of \$4.6 million is made from the General Fund to the WSP to fund the WAJAC program.

### **Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

Clarifies that the WAJAC is to be governed by a board of law enforcement executives appointed by the executive board of the WASPC instead of being under the direction of the WSP. The WSP is required to provide administrative support to the WAJAC.

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**Appropriation:** The sum of \$4.6 million is appropriated from the General Fund to the WSP.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

### **Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The WAJAC, located in the FBI building in downtown Seattle, was started a number of years ago with federal funding. The agency is comprised of regional intelligence groups and analysts located throughout the state. They collect and share information with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. The agency operates on an all-crimes approach and is responsible for handling numerous crimes such as terrorist activities, gang activities, auto thefts, and other crimes.

The WAJAC is a critical agency. During the September 11 event, law enforcement agencies in Washington realized how many challenges they had to face. Now the agency is facing a challenge of their own. The federal government is reducing its funding which will result in approximately a \$1 million shortfall. This is a high priority for law enforcement. State funds need to be allocated to backfill the federal funds. Without this funding it will be difficult to bring over 300 local agencies, 39 sheriff departments, and numerous state and federal agencies together again and keep the WAJAC functioning.

An amendment is suggested to reflect the current way that the WAJAC operates. The WSP is the logical fiscal administrative agent for the WAJAC and the governance of the WAJAC is housed with law enforcement officials from the local, state, and federal level.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative O'Brien, prime sponsor; and Don Pierce, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.