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**HOUSE BILL 1557**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Jinkins, Fey, Sawyer, Kirby, Stambaugh, Muri, Kilduff, Appleton, and Goodman

AN ACT Relating to creating the safe streets pilot project; adding a new section to chapter 43.330 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that community engagement is a foundational principle of successful community policing. When individuals are encouraged to partner with law enforcement, a powerful alliance can be built on mutual trust and respect to achieve their shared goals of improving safety and quality of life, identifying priorities in need of law enforcement resources, and further ensuring that services are tailored to the needs of local communities.

The legislature recognizes current efforts in Washington to mobilize communities to insist on accountable and engaged public safety and to establish cooperative lines of communication between civilians and law enforcement, including the laudable efforts of the safe streets campaign in Pierce county to reverse crime trends by engaging the community and law enforcement in cooperative efforts to improve public safety.

The legislature intends to foster efforts to promote community engagement through the creation of the safe streets pilot project. The safe streets pilot project will facilitate the empowerment of communities to engage in crime prevention efforts though neighborhood organizing, law enforcement-community partnerships, neighborhood watch programs, youth mobilization, and business engagement. The legislature intends to use the safe streets pilot project to measure and examine the impact of safe streets initiatives on community engagement, criminal activity, and improved community-police relationships, and evaluate whether the safe streets initiative is a model for other communities to improve public safety.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.330 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the safe streets pilot project is created in the department for the purpose of fostering community engagement through neighborhood organizing, law enforcement-community partnerships, neighborhood watch programs, youth mobilization, and business engagement. The department shall administer the pilot project. The pilot project must include one grant award to an eligible applicant, which must be selected and receiving grant funds by November 1, 2017. The department shall adopt policies and procedures necessary to administer the pilot project, including for the: (a) Application process; (b) disbursement of the grant award to the selected applicant; (c) tracking compliance and proper use of funds; and (d) measuring outcomes.

(2) An eligible applicant:

(a) Is a public agency or nongovernmental organization, and is not a law enforcement agency;

(b) Is located in a charter county located west of the crest of the Cascade mountains with a population between seven hundred thousand and one million that also contains a city with a population of more than one hundred seventy-five thousand;

(c) Has prior experience with safe streets initiatives or police-community engagement;

(d) Has established or is willing to establish a coordinated effort with committed partners, which must include law enforcement; and

(e) Has established priorities, policies, and measurable goals in compliance with the requirements of subsection (3) of this section.

(3) The grant recipient shall:

(a) Lead and facilitate neighborhood organizing initiatives, including: (i) Empowering community members with tools, skills, confidence, and connections to identify, eradicate, and prevent illegal activity; (ii) making neighborhood improvements to deter future criminal activity; and (iii) educating community members regarding how to connect with city, county, and law enforcement resources;

(b) Build substantive law enforcement-community partnerships, including: (i) Building trust between law enforcement and residents by facilitating purposeful interactions and providing opportunities to clarify misunderstandings; (ii) establishing ongoing communication with law enforcement through a clearly defined process; (iii) facilitating dialogue between law enforcement and residents to resolve historical and current conflicts; (iv) informing law enforcement, through presentations, workshops, or forums, on community perceptions of law enforcement and public safety issues; (v) educating residents on the role and function of law enforcement in the community; (vi) clarifying expectations of law enforcement and of the role of the community in crime prevention; (vii) educating residents on the best practices for reporting emergency and nonemergency activities; (viii) recognizing residents for effective engagement and community leadership; and (ix) recognizing law enforcement officials for efforts to engage underrepresented communities, improve community engagement and empowerment, and reform law enforcement practices;

(c) Educate residents on and, when appropriate, foster neighborhood watch programs aimed at providing timely and detailed information to law enforcement so they can respond quickly, and creating positive connections among neighbors and law enforcement through community engagement;

(d) Mobilize youth in the community, especially high school and middle school age youth, by: (i) Helping them develop knowledge and skills to serve as leaders in their communities; (ii) focusing on prevention of violence and substance abuse; and (iii) empowering youth to directly affect change through bringing youth voices to the table;

(e) Engage businesses to help prevent crimes, such as vandalism and burglaries, through safety training and other prevention initiatives;

(f) Identify and maintain consistent, experienced, and committed leadership for managing the grant, including an administrator who acts as an available point of contact with the department; and

(g) Collect and report data and information required by the department.

(4) The department shall, in consultation with the Washington state institute for public policy, develop reporting guidelines for the grant recipient in order to measure whether the safe streets pilot project had an impact on crime rates and community engagement with, and perceptions of, law enforcement. The department shall submit a preliminary report to the legislature with details on the selected grant recipient and the reporting guidelines by January 1, 2018. The department shall submit a final report on the safe streets pilot project, including an analysis of the reported data required under this subsection, by December 1, 2019.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act expires July 1, 2020.

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