

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 5561

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Extending the expiration date of the law enforcement community engagement grant project.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Law & Justice (originally sponsored by Senators Conway, Pedersen, Lovick, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Liias, Saldaña, Valdez and Wagoner).

**Senate Committee on Law & Justice**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**

**Background:** Community Engagement Grant Project. In 2021, the Legislature created the Community Engagement Grant Project within the Department of Commerce (Commerce). The grant project's purpose is to foster community engagement through neighborhood organizing, law enforcement and community partnerships, youth mobilization, and business engagement. The project includes 12 to 15 grant awards in those counties that have demonstrated their commitment to programs that promote community engagement in public safety including Spokane, Pierce, King, Okanogan, Yakima, Cowlitz, Clark, Chelan-Douglas, Walla Walla, Benton-Franklin, Grant, and Snohomish counties.

Commerce adopted policies and procedures to administer the project, including an application process, disbursement of grant funds to selected applicants, tracking compliance and proper use of funds, and measuring outcomes.

Project Eligibility. Applicants for the grant program must:

- be a public agency or nongovernmental agency that is not a law enforcement agency serving a city or county with a population in excess of 10,000 people;
- have demonstrated experience with community engagement initiatives that impact public safety;
- have community engagement and have established or be willing to establish a coordinated effort with committed partners, which must include law enforcement and organizations committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion of community members;

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and

- have established priorities, policies, and measurable goals in compliance with the requirements of the project.

Grant Participants. Activities for grant participants are outlined. Among other requirements, a successful participant must:

- build substantive law enforcement and community partnerships;
- mobilize youth to partner with neighborhood groups and law enforcement to prevent violence;
- engage businesses to help prevent crimes through safety training and other prevention initiatives; and
- collect and report data and information required by Commerce.

Reporting. Commerce worked with the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to develop reporting guidelines for the grant recipient to measure whether the program had an impact on crime rates and community engagement with law enforcement. A preliminary report was to be submitted to the Legislature by January 1, 2022, with a final report due December 1, 2023.

**Summary:** The Law Enforcement Community Engagement Project is expanded to all rural and urban counties across Washington State. Certain criteria for participants is changed to be disjunctive—"or" not "and." Commerce reporting requirements are changed to every odd numbered year with reporting to include details on implementation and outcomes. The expiration date of January 1, 2024, is extended five years to January 1, 2029.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	48	0
House	96	0

**Effective:** July 23, 2023