

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2370

As Reported By House Committee On:

Criminal Justice & Corrections

Title: An act relating to a law enforcement study.

Brief Description: Establishing a law enforcement study.

Sponsors: Representatives Lovick, Ballasiotes, O'Brien, Kenney, Dunshee, Tokuda, Reardon, Edwards, Sullivan, Stensen, Kagi, Conway, Kastama and Scott.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Criminal Justice & Corrections: 1/21/00, 1/26/00 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) to contract for a study of law enforcement expenditures within counties with populations of more than 150,000.
- Requires the study to distinguish where there are gaps and duplications in law enforcement services.
- Appropriates \$250,000 to the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) for implementation of the study.
- Requires the study to begin by June 1, 2000, and be completed by January 1, 2001.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE & CORRECTIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Ballasiotes, Republican Co-Chair; O'Brien, Democratic Co-Chair; Cairnes, Republican Vice Chair; Lovick, Democratic Vice Chair; B. Chandler; Constantine; Kagi and Koster.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background:

The WASPC is considered a combination of units of local government. It is responsible for, upon the request of a county, assisting that county in helping to develop and implement its local law and justice plan. The association also maintains various crime reports and, on occasion, is responsible for working with other state and local agencies in conducting studies.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A sum of \$250,000 is appropriated from the general fund to the WASPC to study law enforcement needs in counties with populations of more than 150,000. The purpose of the study is to provide recommendations for improvements within law enforcement jurisdictions, WASPC, and the Legislature by reviewing total law enforcement expenditures for each county and the cities within those counties. The study must include a comprehensive review of total law enforcement costs and the types of costs, including but not limited to special services, such as Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams, bomb disposal units, air support, marine units, hostage negotiation teams, homicide investigation units, drug units, canine units, arson investigation teams, computer fraud and forensics units, domestic violence and special assault units, and gang and youth violence units. The study must distinguish where there are duplications and gaps in service delivery.

In addition, the study must obtain data from those counties and law enforcement agencies where master inter-local agreements, joint specialty service units, and other cooperative arrangements have been developed between law enforcement agencies to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and ensured quality of specialty law enforcement services.

The WASPC must commence the study by June 1, 2000, and complete the study by January 1, 2001. A final report must be distributed to the appropriate standing committee by January 30, 2001.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The appropriation is reduced from \$300,000 to \$250,000 and some technical amendments are made.

Appropriation: The sum of \$250,000, if specific funding for the purposes of this act is not provided by June 30, 2000, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and void.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 12, 2000.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Due to the passage of Initiative 695, many counties and cities are being required to cut back on local services. In addition, population increases and overall economic expansion in Washington have had a significant effect on law enforcement, especially in counties with major urban centers and suburban growth. With new cities, annexations and more people, law enforcement needs have also grown and become more complex and sophisticated.

Currently, there is an absence of statewide law enforcement needs and service analyses or planning to address current and future law enforcement requirements. This bill will provide funding for that analysis. It is hoped that the results of the study will help many counties and cities to coordinate and consolidate their law enforcement services more efficiently with other neighboring entities.

In fact, due to a recent inter-local agreement between the city of Vancouver and Clark County, a special weapons and tactics team has been consolidated. As a result of this coordination, staff has been reduced in half and the tax dollars saved were redistributed to other areas. It is hoped that the consolidation of other teams such as methamphetamine labs and identity theft teams will result from this law enforcement study.

The goal of this bill is to save tax dollars and to protect the citizens of Washington. It will also help to achieve not only more efficiency within law enforcement jurisdictions but also help to achieve the maximum effectiveness out of their current resources.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In favor) Sheriff Dave Reichert, King County Sheriff; Chief Doug Maas, Vancouver Police Department; and Mike Patrick, Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs.