

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2999

As Passed House:
February 12, 2008

Title: An act relating to the "chief for a day" program.

Brief Description: Concerning the "chief for a day" program.

Sponsors: By Representatives Hurst, Loomis, Kelley, Kirby, Liias, Morrell, Green and Simpson;
by request of Governor Gregoire.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness: 1/28/08 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/12/08, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes the "Chief for a Day" program dedicated to paying special attention to chronically ill children.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Majority Report: 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:

The Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) was established in 1974. Its primary purpose is to provide basic law enforcement training, corrections training, and educational programs for criminal justice personnel, including commissioned officers, corrections officers, fire marshals, and prosecuting attorneys.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature finds that the CJTC's participation in charitable work, such as the "Chief for a Day" program (program) that provides special attention to chronically ill children, advances the overall purposes of the CJTC by promoting positive relationships between law enforcement and the citizens of Washington.

The program means a program in which commissioners and staff partner with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, hospitals, and the community to provide a day of special attention to chronically ill children. Each child is selected and sponsored by a law enforcement agency. The event occurs one day, annually or every other year, and may occur on the grounds and in the facilities of the CJTC. The program may include any appropriate honoring of the child as a chief, such as a certificate swearing the child in as a chief, a badge, a uniform, and donated gifts such as games, puzzles, and art supplies.

The duties and powers of the CJTC are expanded to include promoting positive relationships between law enforcement and citizens by authorizing commissioners and staff to participate in the program events. The CJTC may accept grants and gifts and use public facilities for purposes of the events. The Executive Director of the CJTC must designate staff who may participate in the program. However, all staff and commissioners who participate in the events must comply with the state's ethics rules and regulations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This is a very important piece of legislation from the Governor. This program has been going on for years but just recently the Auditor's Office and the Office of the Attorney General has expressed some concern about possibly needing some explicit statutory language authorizing the continuance of the program.

This program is similar to the "Make a Wish" Program. It allows the community to give back to children with special needs and the process itself has been both beneficial and exciting to all of those that participate. It is a program that brings law enforcement agencies from all levels together to recognize children who are chronically ill. It is also important to show the new recruits (the newly hired commissioned officers) the community aspect of their jobs. When a sick child is happy they have hope and when there is hope there is a possibility for recovery. There are no words that can explain the reward or emotion that expresses the moment of happiness that this program provides to sick children.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Hurst, prime sponsor; Michael Parsons, Criminal Justice Training Center; Reid Weaver, Monroe Police Department; Herman Koppisch, Tacoma Police Department; and Jeff DeVere, Washington State Patrol.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.