H-3335.1

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**HOUSE BILL 2539**

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**State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Maycumber, Lovick, Klippert, Chapman, Lekanoff, Corry, Stonier, Irwin, MacEwen, Frame, Walsh, Harris, Dent, Griffey, Barkis, Graham, Goehner, Chambers, Mosbrucker, Riccelli, Blake, Leavitt, Valdez, and Volz

AN ACT Relating to establishing a law enforcement professional development outreach grant program; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature recognizes that recruiting and retaining law enforcement officers is a significant challenge faced by law enforcement agencies across the state. There are many causes, including salary, high attrition, and generational shifts in the workplace. However, community distrust of law enforcement has also made the profession less desirable for new and qualified candidates. It is paramount for law enforcement agencies to bridge these gaps with the community to both improve external relations and advance recruitment and retention efforts.

Law enforcement agencies should reflect the demographics of the communities they serve. A dynamic, diverse, community-oriented police force will improve external relations and therefore ensure the effective delivery of services to the public. Therefore, the legislature hereby establishes a grant program for local law enforcement agencies to engage in innovative outreach efforts designed to promote a diverse police force reflective of local communities.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the criminal justice training commission shall develop and implement a law enforcement professional development outreach grant program for the purpose of encouraging a broader diversity of candidates from underrepresented groups and communities to seek careers in law enforcement.

(2) Grants must be awarded to local law enforcement agencies based on locally developed proposals. Two or more agencies may submit a joint proposal for a multijurisdictional project. A proposal must include a specific plan for encouraging persons from underrepresented groups and communities to seek careers in law enforcement. The commission shall establish policies for applications under this section in addition to criteria for evaluating and selecting grant recipients. To the extent possible, at least one grant recipient agency should be from the east side of the state and one from the west side of the state, with the crest of the Cascades being the dividing line. No single grant award may exceed sixty thousand dollars. The commission shall select grant recipients and begin distributing funds no later than December 1, 2020.

(3) The commission shall submit a report to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature on the grant program no later than December 1, 2021. The report must include a summary of the grant recipients, use of funds, and any potential impact on anticipated recruitment.

(4) This section expires July 1, 2022.

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