

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6570**

Chapter 327, Laws of 2020

(partial veto)

66th Legislature  
2020 Regular Session

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS TASK FORCE

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 11, 2020

Passed by the Senate March 9, 2020  
Yeas 48 Nays 0

CYRUS HABIB

**President of the Senate**

Passed by the House March 5, 2020  
Yeas 97 Nays 0

LAURIE JINKINS

**Speaker of the House of  
Representatives**

Approved April 2, 2020 3:14 PM with  
the exception of section 3, which is  
vetoed.

JAY INSLEE

**Governor of the State of Washington**

CERTIFICATE

I, Brad Hendrickson, Secretary of  
the Senate of the State of  
Washington, do hereby certify that  
the attached is **SUBSTITUTE SENATE  
BILL 6570** as passed by the Senate  
and the House of Representatives on  
the dates hereon set forth.

BRAD HENDRICKSON

**Secretary**

FILED

April 3, 2020

**Secretary of State  
State of Washington**

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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6570**

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AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2020 Regular Session

**State of Washington**

**66th Legislature**

**2020 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Behavioral Health Subcommittee to Health & Long Term Care  
(originally sponsored by Senators King, Saldaña, Wagoner, Lovelett,  
and Wilson, C.)

READ FIRST TIME 02/07/20.

1 AN ACT Relating to law enforcement officer mental health and  
2 wellness; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that law  
5 enforcement officers respond to and witness some of the most tragic  
6 events that happen in our communities. On-the-job stress can have a  
7 significant impact on their physical and mental well-being and can  
8 accumulate over the course of a career.

9 (2) Research indicates that law enforcement officers experience  
10 key risk factors for suicides, including exposure to trauma, alcohol  
11 use, availability of firearms, and the strains of shift work.  
12 Compared to the general population, law enforcement officers report  
13 much higher rates of depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and  
14 other anxiety-related mental health conditions. These health  
15 conditions have a significant impact on the officers and their  
16 families.

17 (3) A 2019 report from the United States department of justice  
18 found that, nationally, law enforcement suicides are 28.2 per one  
19 hundred thousand for men and 12.2 per one hundred thousand for women.  
20 A 2018 report by the Ruderman family foundation found that law

1 enforcement officers are one and one-half times more likely to die by  
2 suicide than the general population.

3 (4) Despite these significant risk factors, there is no central  
4 repository of comprehensive data regarding law enforcement officer  
5 suicides. As a result, there are no comprehensive tools available to  
6 law enforcement agencies to develop effective suicide prevention  
7 strategies, or to know whether those strategies are making a  
8 difference.

9 (5) Although Washington state has conducted significant work  
10 towards suicide prevention more broadly, there is not a current  
11 statewide program that provides comprehensive, evidence-based mental  
12 health and suicide prevention resources for law enforcement and their  
13 families.

14 (6) The legislature finds that there is an urgent need to develop  
15 resources and interventions specifically targeted at helping law  
16 enforcement and their family members manage their behavioral health  
17 needs.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1)(a) The department of health shall  
19 convene a task force on law enforcement officer mental health and  
20 wellness in Washington state with members as provided in this  
21 subsection:

- 22 (i) The secretary of health, or the secretary's designee;
- 23 (ii) The chief of the Washington state patrol, or the chief's  
24 designee;
- 25 (iii) The director of the health care authority, or the  
26 director's designee;
- 27 (iv) The secretary of the department of corrections, or the  
28 secretary's designee;
- 29 (v) A representative from the University of Washington's  
30 forefront suicide prevention program;
- 31 (vi) The executive director of the criminal justice training  
32 commission, or the director's designee;
- 33 (vii) A psychiatrist;
- 34 (viii) A representative of local public health;
- 35 (ix) One representative each from:
  - 36 (A) The Washington council of police and sheriffs;
  - 37 (B) The Washington state fraternal order of police;
  - 38 (C) The council of metropolitan police and sheriffs;
  - 39 (D) The Washington state patrol troopers association;

1 (E) The Washington state patrol lieutenants and captains  
2 association;

3 (F) Tribal law enforcement;

4 (G) The Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs;

5 (H) An association representing community behavioral health  
6 agencies;

7 (I) An association representing mental health providers; and

8 (J) An association representing substance use disorder treatment  
9 providers.

10 (b) The representative from the department of health shall serve  
11 as the chair of the task force.

12 (c) At a minimum, the task force shall meet quarterly.

13 (2) The task force shall review the following issues and  
14 information:

15 (a) Data related to the behavioral health status of law  
16 enforcement officers, including suicide rates, substance abuse rates,  
17 posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, availability of behavioral  
18 health services, and utilization of behavioral health services;

19 (b) Factors unique to the law enforcement community that affect  
20 the behavioral health of persons working in law enforcement,  
21 including factors affecting suicide rates;

22 (c) Components that should be addressed in the behavioral health  
23 and suicide prevention pilot program established in section 3 of this  
24 act, including consideration of components that relate to similar  
25 programs funded or partially funded by the bureau of justice  
26 assistance and the national institute of justice;

27 (d) The recommendations of the Washington state department of  
28 health's suicide prevention plan and the applicability of the plan's  
29 recommendations to law enforcement mental health issues;

30 (e) The recommendations of the United States department of  
31 justice 2019 report to congress on law enforcement mental health and  
32 wellness; and

33 (f) Options to improve the behavioral health status of and reduce  
34 prevalent mental health issues and the suicide risk among law  
35 enforcement officers and their families.

36 (3) Staff support for the task force shall be provided by the  
37 department of health.

38 (4) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations  
39 to the governor and relevant committees of the legislature by  
40 December 1, 2021, including a summary of:

1 (a) The data to be reviewed described in subsection (2) of this  
2 section;

3 (b) The results of the pilot projects funded by this act and  
4 recommendations regarding the continuation of those programs;

5 (c) The best practices and policies for providing mental health  
6 services and preventing law enforcement suicides; and

7 (d) Recommendations on resources and technical assistance to  
8 support law enforcement agencies in preventing law enforcement  
9 suicides.

10 (5) This section expires July 1, 2022.

11 ***\*NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. (1) Subject to the availability of***  
12 ***amounts appropriated for this specific purpose not to exceed three***  
13 ***hundred thousand dollars per fiscal year, the Washington association***  
14 ***of sheriffs and police chiefs shall establish three pilot projects to***  
15 ***support behavioral health improvement and suicide prevention efforts***  
16 ***for law enforcement officers.***

17 (2) *The Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs*  
18 *shall establish a competitive grant program to award funding for the*  
19 *three pilot projects by September 1, 2020.*

20 (3) *Law enforcement associations and agencies are eligible to*  
21 *compete for grant funding.*

22 (4) *The following programs and activities are eligible for grant*  
23 *funding:*

24 (a) *Public information and wellness promotion campaigns;*

25 (b) *Embedded mental health professionals;*

26 (c) *Peer support programs;*

27 (d) *Resiliency training programs; and*

28 (e) *Critical incident stress management programs.*

29 (5) *Grantees must provide a report to the association on the*  
30 *results of their program by October 1, 2021. The association must*  
31 *provide the information to the officer mental health and wellness*  
32 *task force established in section 2 of this act, for incorporation in*  
33 *the December 1, 2021, report to the governor and relevant committees*  
34 *of the legislature.*

*\*Sec. 3 was vetoed. See message at end of chapter.*

Passed by the Senate March 9, 2020.

Passed by the House March 5, 2020.

Approved by the Governor April 2, 2020, with the exception of  
certain items that were vetoed.

Filed in Office of Secretary of State April 3, 2020.

Note: Governor's explanation of partial veto is as follows:

"I am returning herewith, without my approval as to Section Sec 3, Substitute Senate Bill No. 6570 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to law enforcement officer mental health and wellness."

Section 3 of this bill directs the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs to establish three pilot projects, subject to amounts appropriated for this purpose, to support behavioral health and other improvement efforts for law enforcement officers. With the rapidly changing environment related to the state's response to COVID-19 and the new economic realities the state faces, I made the difficult choice to veto the funding provided to support this pilot project in Sec 218 (17) and Sec 221 (65) of Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6168.

For these reasons I have vetoed Section Sec 3 of Substitute Senate Bill No. 6570.

With the exception of Section Sec 3, Substitute Senate Bill No. 6570 is approved."

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