AN ACT Relating to strengthening diversity, equity, and inclusion in the state patrol workforce; adding a new section to chapter 43.43 RCW; creating a new section; making an appropriation; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. (1) The legislature finds that:
   (a) In 2021, the total Washington state patrol workforce was 84 percent white and 67 percent male, the field force workforce was 86 percent white and 86 percent male, and the managerial staff was as high as 93 percent white;
   (b) A strong diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic recruitment and retention plan is necessary to:
       (i) Provide the state patrol with the benefits of a diverse workforce, improving service to the public, increasing employee productivity, and providing new perspectives and innovative approaches to achieving the agency's mission of enhancing the safety and security of all people and communities; and
       (ii) Fulfill the enormous recruiting effort to reduce vacancies at the agency;
   (c) Public employment opportunities at the Washington state patrol, as either commissioned or noncommissioned staff, offer...
careers that should be equally accessible to all people in the labor force; and

(d) The transition to a culture that fosters workforce diversity, equity, and inclusion requires steadfast commitment over the long term.

(2) Therefore, the legislature intends to:

(a) Challenge the state patrol to change and adapt its culture to attract and retain a more diverse workforce, which is representative of the labor force as a whole;

(b) Establish more effective legislative and executive oversight mechanisms for the state patrol's efforts to increase workforce diversity;

(c) Increase accountability and transparency relating to the state patrol's progress in increasing workforce diversity; and

(d) Provide technical assistance and support for the state patrol's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts over the long term.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 43.43 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The Washington state patrol shall work with the department of enterprise services, which will run and oversee a competitive procurement process to select and hire an independent, expert consultant to:

(a) Collect benchmark data on the demographic composition of the current Washington state patrol workforce and applicants in the recruitment process, including trooper academy classes and new hires across positions in the agency. In addition, this task must include comparative demographic data for other law enforcement training classes within the state;

(b) Conduct a study of the labor force available for the commissioned and noncommissioned staff of the state patrol, with a focus on the availability of black, indigenous, Latino, Asian, and other groups currently underrepresented in the state patrol workforce;

(c) Using the results of the labor force availability study, establish benchmark goals for the demographic composition of the state patrol workforce;

(d) Evaluate progress in the implementation of the diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic recruitment and retention plan developed for the Washington state patrol in 2021;
(e) Provide technical assistance regarding best practices to effectively foster a diverse workforce;

(f) Annually update the diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic recruitment and retention plan to reflect activities completed, new strategies, and next steps;

(g) Report quarterly to the governor and appropriate committees of the legislature on the composition of the current workforce compared to established benchmarks and goals; and

(h) Report annually to the governor and appropriate committees of the legislature on the results of the evaluation of progress in implementing the diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic recruitment and retention plan.

(2) This section expires June 30, 2032.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. (1) The sum of $1,277,000, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal biennium ending June 30, 2023, from the state patrol highway account—state to the Washington state patrol.

(2) The appropriation in this section is subject to the following conditions and limitations:

   (a) $400,000 of the state patrol highway account appropriation is provided solely for the fiscal year 2023 costs of a contract with an independent consultant to conduct the studies, evaluations, and reporting functions required in section 2 of this act. The state patrol shall work with the department of enterprise services to conduct broad outreach for the consultant to ensure that the pool of potential consultants demonstrates familiarity with diversity, equity, and inclusion recruitment and retention efforts in law enforcement.

   (b) $877,000 of the state patrol highway account appropriation is provided solely for the state patrol to achieve the following objectives:

      (i) $592,000 to fill staffing positions within the state patrol's diversity, equity, and inclusion program.

      (ii) $59,000 to conduct a study to analyze existing state barriers to hiring commissioned officers. The study shall make recommendations to amend current state patrol hiring practices and underlying statutes that may need revision. Recommendations are due to the governor and appropriate committees of the legislature by November 1, 2022.
(iii) $195,000 to contract with a social media and marketing consultant to standardize messaging and recruitment efforts to diverse audiences across media platforms.

(iv) $31,000 to contract with an external psychologist to perform exams.