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**HOUSE BILL 1638**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Fey, Barkis, Robertson, Lekanoff, Schmidt, Ramel, Duerr, Timmons, Eslick, and Jacobsen

AN ACT Relating to the creation of a state trooper expedited recruitment incentive program; adding a new section to chapter 43.43 RCW; creating a new section; and declaring an emergency.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that the Washington state patrol is experiencing historic levels of trooper vacancies, with almost 30 percent of trooper positions unfilled. At the same time, Washington is experiencing alarming increases in serious and fatal crashes on our roadways. The legislature recognizes that the Washington state patrol is working on strengthening its recruiting efforts, with a focus on broadening outreach to candidates from marginalized communities. This historic confluence of factors justifies extraordinary measures to assist the Washington state patrol in its efforts to attract and retain sufficient numbers of troopers for the protection of the citizens of the state of Washington.

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

(1) The Washington state patrol shall develop and implement a state trooper expedited recruitment incentive program for the purpose of recruiting and filling vacant trooper positions. Recruitment must redouble the effort to create a more diverse workforce and must also provide an accelerated pathway for joining the state patrol for individuals who have previously been employed as a general authority Washington peace officer in the state of Washington.

(2) The state trooper expedited recruitment incentive program established by the Washington state patrol must include:

(a) Hiring procedures and an accelerated training program for lateral hires from other agencies that recognizes the knowledge and experience of candidates previously employed in law enforcement; and

(b) A sign-on bonus for each trooper hired through the expedited recruitment incentive program as follows:

(i) $5,000 for each cadet after completion of the Washington state patrol academy;

(ii) $5,000 for each cadet after completion of a one-year probation period;

(iii) $7,500 for each lateral hire after completion of the accelerated training program for lateral hires; and

(iv) $7,500 for each lateral hire after completion of a one-year probation period.

(3) The establishment of the state trooper expedited recruitment incentive program is subject to a change to the applicable collective bargaining agreements negotiated with the exclusive bargaining representatives.

(4) This section does not interfere with, impede, or in any way diminish the right of the officers of the Washington state patrol to bargain collectively with the state through the exclusive bargaining representatives as provided for in RCW 41.56.473.

(5) Expenditures and eligibility for the state trooper expedited recruitment incentive program established in this section are subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose.

(6) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Cadet" means a person employed for the express purpose of receiving the on-the-job training required for attendance at the Washington state patrol academy and for becoming a commissioned trooper.

(b) "Lateral hire" means an eligible employee previously employed as a general authority Washington peace officer in the state of Washington.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately.

**--- END ---**