

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESHB 1387

As Passed House:

March 3, 2023

Title: An act relating to requiring the criminal justice training commission to establish a program to recruit and train a pool of applicants who may be employed by certain law enforcement agencies in the state.

Brief Description: Requiring the criminal justice training commission to establish a program.

Sponsors: House Committee on Community Safety, Justice, & Reentry (originally sponsored by Representatives Ramos, Goodman, Callan, Ryu, Ramel and Pollet).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Community Safety, Justice, & Reentry: 2/13/23, 2/16/23 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/3/23, 95-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Requires the Criminal Justice Training Commission to convene a work group to study and make recommendations on the recruitment and training of a pool of candidates who may be hired as peace officers by various law enforcement agencies.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SAFETY, JUSTICE, & REENTRY

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Goodman, Chair; Simmons, Vice Chair; Mosbrucker, Ranking Minority Member; Griffey, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Davis, Farivar, Fosse, Graham and Ramos.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

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

Background:

All general authority peace officers must be certified by the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) as a condition of employment. Once a person is conditionally offered employment with a law enforcement agency, the person must undergo a background investigation to determine the applicant's suitability for employment. After the background check is complete, the person may complete the certification process with the CJTC, including undergoing basic law enforcement training.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill:

The Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) must convene a work group to study and make recommendations regarding establishing a program to recruit, and issue certifications to, a pool of candidates who may be hired as peace officers by city and county law enforcement agencies. The work group must consist of representatives of:

- the CJTC;
- the Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs;
- the Washington State Fraternal Order of Police;
- the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs;
- the Association of Washington Cities;
- the Washington State Association of Counties;
- the Washington State Office of Equity;
- experts in human resources best practices;
- the Washington Coalition for Police Accountability;
- a statewide organization advocating on behalf of crime victims and survivors; and
- any other stakeholders deemed appropriate by the CJTC.

The study must include the following:

- a plan to establish a program to recruit, and issue certifications to, a pool of candidates who may be hired as peace officers by city and county law enforcement agencies in the state;
- the qualifications of applicants who may participate in the pool;
- best human resources practices to produce an applicant pool with a broad spectrum of backgrounds and experience;
- the types of law enforcement agencies that may hire applicants from the pool and the timing of when offers of employment may be made;
- the manner in which the CJTC should be reimbursed for the ongoing costs of recruiting and training pool applicants;
- methods to encourage law enforcement agencies to hire applicants from the pool; and
- any statutory or regulatory barriers to establishing the pool.

The CJTC must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature by November 15, 2024, which must include draft legislation implementing the recommendations. The CJTC may contract with a consultant to implement the study and

may hire an employee to oversee the contracting process and manage the implementation of the contract.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Every law enforcement agency in the state is currently understaffed. Local governments have ongoing hiring problems. This will only get worse as demographics lead to more retirements. The Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) is at capacity. The state is currently trying to expand the CJTC's capacity through regional centers. This bill will help the state figure out how to expand recruitment and outreach to outstanding and diverse candidates. A statewide approach will help us solve this problem in a comprehensive manner. Candidates will still go through the same background checks and training. This bill will merely speed up the process. The bill will not create competition for law enforcement agencies, but rather will support them and get people into the right agencies.

Theft is the number one issue for retailers. Police need resources and training to do their jobs. This bill is a step in the right direction to increase public safety for customers and employees.

There are still some things to work out with this idea. We should bring law enforcement and stakeholders to the table to work things out. A study is the best way to tackle this issue.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) Law enforcement is having a tough time due to issues like COVID-19 and law enforcement reform. Staffing has been a problem. Studying this issue will help law enforcement. The CJTC is stretched thin. Their work is not as good as it could be. The Washington Coalition for Police Accountability should be part of the work group in order to bring communities and stakeholders together.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Bill Ramos, prime sponsor; Monica Alexander, Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission; Candice Bock, Association of Washington Cities; and Mark Johnson, Washington Retail Association.

(Other) Jeff DeVere, Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs; and Paul Benz, Washington Partners for Social Change.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.