

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1638

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Creating a state trooper expedited recruitment incentive program.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Fey, Barkis, Robertson, Lekanoff, Schmidt, Ramel, Duerr, Timmons, Eslick and Jacobsen).

House Committee on Transportation
Senate Committee on Transportation

Background:

The Washington State Patrol (WSP) is responsible for traffic law enforcement, collision investigation, criminal interdiction, terrorism prevention, and motorist assistance on the interstate and state highway systems. The WSP highway field force includes 683 trooper positions. As of September 2022, 187 positions were not filled.

Completion of the WSP Academy is required for all troopers. The academy includes two months of arming class, five months of trooper basic training, and two months of field training. The WSP can administer four academies in a biennium. However, only two classes are funded in the WSP's base budget.

Compensation and personnel matters for troopers are collectively bargained between the state and the troopers' exclusive bargaining representative.

Summary:

The WSP is directed to develop and implement a State Trooper Expedited Recruitment Incentive Program (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 WSP for individuals who have previously been employed as a General Authority Peace Officer.

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.

The Incentive Program may include 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. The Incentive Program may also include a sign-on bonus for each trooper hired through the program.

The establishment of the Incentive Program is subject to a change to the applicable collective bargaining agreements negotiated with the exclusive bargaining representatives.

Expenditures and eligibility for the Incentive Program are subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose. The specific amounts, requirements, and other provisions of the bonus policy for cadet or lateral hires are subject to the applicable provisions set forth in an omnibus transportation appropriations act.

Two new definitions are provided. "Cadet" is defined as a person employed for the express purpose of receiving the on-the-job training required for attendance at the WSP academy and for becoming a commissioned trooper. "Lateral hire" is defined as an eligible employee previously employed as a General Authority Peace Officer.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	94	1	
Senate	48	0	(Senate amended)
House	98	0	(House concurred)

Effective: May 15, 2023