SENATE BILL REPORT
SB 5286

As of Third Reading

Title: An act relating to policing costs driven by proximity to state hospitals.

Brief Description: Concerning policing costs driven by proximity to state hospitals.

Sponsors: Senators Holy, Dhingra, King, Liias, Wilson, J., Salomon and Valdez.

Brief History:
Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 1/28/25, 1/30/25 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes a community partnership program between the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and the City of Medical Lake to support community policing efforts at and near Eastern State Hospital.
- Recognizes the existing community partnership program between DSHS and the City of Lakewood.
- Requires the state to provide funds annually to these cities to support the community partnership programs.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Majority Report: Do pass.
Signed by Senators Dhingra, Chair; Trudeau, Vice Chair; Holy, Ranking Member; Fortunato, Lovick, Salomon, Torres and Wagoner.

Staff: Tim Ford (786-7414)

Background: Western State Hospital and Eastern State Hospital are state psychiatric hospitals located in the City of Lakewood and City of Medical Lake, respectively, that provide treatment for patients who are involuntarily detained for civil and forensic mental

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health treatment. The state hospitals are overseen by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). As of January 21, 2025, the inpatient census at the two state hospitals is 627 patients at Western State Hospital and 255 patients at Eastern State Hospital.

The 2023-25 state operating budget provided $311,000 per fiscal year in provisioned funds to both Lakewood and Medical Lake to support community policing efforts in the communities surrounding each state hospital. The Lakewood proviso characterizes these amounts as being for a community partnership. The same budget also provides $45,000 per year to Lakewood and $25,000 per year to Medical Lake for police services at the hospital and surrounding areas.

While a budget proviso only lasts for the duration of the the budget, similar provisos have been longstanding. The $45,000 reimbursement to Lakewood for police protection goes back to the 2002 supplemental budget, and has been renewed every year since. The larger proviso to Lakewood for a community partnership dates back to the 2009-11 biennial budget, which provided the amount of $231,000 per fiscal year. Medical Lake was not initially included in these provisos; similar provisos for Medical Lake, first appear in the 2017-19 operating budget, and have been maintained since.

Summary of Bill: A community partnership program is established between DSHS and Medical Lake to support community policing efforts at Eastern State Hospital and adjacent areas. The community partnership program between DSHS and Lakewood to support community policing efforts is recognized and perpetuated.

The state must provide funds to support these community partnership programs annually to Medical Lake and Lakewood in amounts to be determined in the biennial budget that reflect anticipated service levels and costs. The aggregate amounts must reflect the relative size of each state hospital and individual community needs, and are in addition to any appropriation provided for payment for police services.

DSHS must collect data from Medical Lake and Lakewood on the use of the funds and the number of calls responded to by the community policing programs and submit an annual report with this information to the Office of Financial Management and appropriate fiscal committees of the Legislature by December 1.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: There is a question of predictability of

revenue streams for the funds that both Lakewood and Medical Lake rely upon to maintain adequate staffing levels to service the needs of the state hospitals. If the agencies are going to provide services to the state, we should avoid another unfunded mandate. These funds are important to our city. There are three DSHS facilities in Medical Lake which we provide services 24 hours a day. Ten percent of our city's population are wards of the state. One-fifth of our call volume is driven by state facilities, and they are time consuming calls requiring investigation. The facilities take up real estate but pay no property taxes. Western State Hospital presents unique challenges for our police department. When we instituted the Community Policing Program we reduced calls by 40 percent. We also provide training to staff and residents. Our officers develop a relationship with the hospital staff which puts them in a better position to investigate incidents which occur. This is above and beyond the basic police service provided by the city.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Jeff Holy, Prime Sponsor; Captain Chris Westby, City of Lakewood; Terri Cooper, Mayor of City of Medical Lake; Inspector Justin Lundgren, Spokane County Sheriff's Office.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.