

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2685

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to probationary periods of campus police officer appointees.

Brief Description: Establishing the probationary period for campus police officer appointees.

Sponsors: Representatives Kenney, Jarrett, Fromhold, Tokuda and Lantz; by request of University of Washington.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/30/02, 2/5/02 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- The probationary period is extended for officer appointees who are required to attend the basic law enforcement training academy.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Kenney, Chair; Fromhold, Vice Chair; Cox, Ranking Minority Member; Chase, Dunn, Gombosky, Jarrett, Lantz and Skinner.

Staff: Antonio Sanchez (786-7383).

Background:

The Washington Personnel Resources Board (WPRB) adopts rules regarding the procedures pertaining to state personnel, including the probationary period required for newly appointed permanent employees. Currently, the probationary period for all newly appointed campus police is set at 12 months from the date of their appointment.

The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission provides programs and standards for the training of criminal justice personnel. All law enforcement personnel, except volunteers and reserve officers, employed on or after January 1, 1978, are

required to have basic law enforcement training that complies with the standards set out by the commission.

Under the current system where newly appointed officers have a probation period of 12 months from the time of hire, it is often almost 12 months before a police officer gets into the academy, graduates and goes to work. As a result of this time line, officers spend only a short amount of time actually on the job before they must have a job performance evaluation. Some of the universities have expressed concern about the time line for evaluation and feel that officers cannot be given proper evaluation of their on-the-job work performance under the current system.

Summary of Bill:

For new officer appointees who are required to attend the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission basic law enforcement academy, the 12-month probationary period is set at the date when the officer successfully completes the academy. If academy training is not required, the 12-month probationary period begins at the date the officer is appointed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: This will allow us to better assess the performance of our officers. This change will eliminate an ongoing problem we have had with sending officers to the criminal justice training center after waiting for a spot to open up, and then not having the opportunity to properly evaluate how they are working out on the job.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Vicky M. Peltzer, Dick Thompson, and Everett Butler, University of Washington; and Steve Huntsberry, The Evergreen State College Police Department.