

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5532

As of February 19, 2013

Title: An act relating to requiring crisis intervention training for peace officers.

Brief Description: Requiring crisis intervention training for peace officers.

Sponsors: Senators Rolfes, Hobbs, Billig, Darneille, Keiser, McAuliffe and Kline.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Law & Justice: 2/18/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON LAW & JUSTICE

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

Background: The Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) provides basic law enforcement training, corrections training, and educational programs for criminal justice personnel, including commissioned officers, corrections officers, and other public safety professionals.

Basic law enforcement officer training is generally required of all law enforcement officers, with the exception of volunteers and reserve officers employed in Washington. The training consists of a 720-hour program over 18 weeks covering a wide variety of subjects including: criminal law and procedures, criminal investigation, firearms training, traffic enforcement, crisis intervention, defensive tactics, and communication skills. Law enforcement personnel must begin basic law enforcement training within the first six months of employment unless otherwise waived by CJTC.

In addition to the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) and the Law Enforcement Academy, CJTC provides training to:

- persons responsible for investigating and interviewing children for child sexual abuse and neglect cases;
- law enforcement officers on vehicular pursuits;
- law enforcement officers on how to interact with persons with developmental disabilities or mental illnesses;
- law enforcement officers on how to identify, respond to, and report malicious harassment crimes and other crimes of bigotry or bias;

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- law enforcement officers on investigating and interviewing techniques for cases involving child abuse and neglect; and
- law enforcement and corrections officers hired or promoted to first level supervisors and middle management positions.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Proposed Substitute): Subject to appropriation, CJTC must provide crisis intervention training to every new full-time law enforcement officer employed by a state, county, or municipal law enforcement agency after July 1, 2015. The training must consist of not less than eight hours and be incorporated into BLEA.

Each full-time law enforcement officer certified before July 1, 2015, and employed by a state, county, or municipal law enforcement agency must be provided with the opportunity for crisis intervention training no later than July 1, 2017. The training must consist of not less than eight hours and must be substantially similar in hours and content to the training offered through BLEA.

All full-time law enforcement officers who are certified after July 1, 2015, are required to complete two hours of annual crisis intervention retraining.

Crisis intervention training is defined as training designed to provide tools and resources to law enforcement officers in order to respond effectively to individuals who may be experiencing an emotional, mental, physical, behavioral, or chemical dependency crisis, distress, or problem; and also increase the safety of both law enforcement officers and individuals in crisis.

Subject to appropriation, CJTC must develop a program to make available crisis intervention training to 25 percent of currently certified law enforcement officers, that are assigned to patrol duties, no later than December 1, 2017. The training must be comprised of 40 hours of commission-certified training.

Appropriation: \$500,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 11, 2013.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill will require that all police officers receive the necessary training on how to deal with individuals in crisis. If this training had been available prior to the incident in our family home, our son may not have been shot to death by responding officers. Our son had a diagnosed mental illness. The first responders did not understand how to interact with him and did not deescalate the situation. As a result, our son was shot and bled to death in his room. As parents, we were not able to help him or be with him because the police barred us from the room. Mentally ill people are involved in 4 percent of crimes but are 11 times more likely to be victims of crime. The first point of

contact between a person in crisis and first responders, such as law enforcement, is vital. The de-institutionalization of the mentally ill places a heavier burden on communities. We all need to know how to better deal with people with mental illnesses. Law enforcement training budgets have been cut repeatedly. The police training needs to emphasize proper responses and also work with the community providers to make appropriate referrals.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Rolfes, prime sponsor; William H. Ostling, Joyce Ostling, Tamara Ostling, Wendy Burroughs, citizens; Don Pierce, Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Assn.; Sue Rahr, Criminal Justice Training Commission.