

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 5405

As Reported by House Committee On: Public Safety

Title: An act relating to protection for occupants of national guard facilities.

Brief Description: Requiring protection for occupants of national guard facilities.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Wilson, Fortunato and Zeiger).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Public Safety: 3/13/17, 3/16/17 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Military Department to provide adequate protection for occupants of National Guard recruiting offices and other facilities not located on a secure military installation.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Goodman, Chair; Pellicciotti, Vice Chair; Klippert, Ranking Minority Member; Hayes, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chapman, Griffey, Holy, Orwall, Pettigrew and Van Werven.

Staff: Kelly Leonard (786-7147).

Background:

The Washington State Military Department (Department) is composed of several major operational divisions under the command of the Adjutant General, including the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, State Guard, Emergency Management Division, Washington Youth Academy, and State and Federal Support Services.

The National Guard is a military force of the state that is organized, equipped, and federally recognized under the provisions of the National Defense Act of the United States. The

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Governor can order the National Guard to active state service when an event, such as a natural or manmade disaster, occurs or when there is an imminent threat to public health and safety. The National Guard is headquartered at Camp Murray.

The Department maintains recruiting centers, armories, and other facilities for the National Guard that are not located on a secure military installation.

Summary of Bill:

Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the Department must provide adequate protection for occupants of National Guard recruiting offices and other facilities not located on a secure military installation.

Adequate protection is determined by an assessment of possible threats and vulnerabilities of a facility. Adequate measures to protect occupants include, but are not limited to:

- the use of armed security personnel;
- security cameras;
- locking devices;
- obscuration;
- ballistic barriers;
- soft body armor;
- magnetometers;
- other protective equipment; and
- specialized training in avoiding, preparing, or responding to threats facing National Guard facilities.

Except for the use of armed security personnel, the costs of providing protection are "one time" costs.

The bill specifically does not create a private right of action.

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) There is serious concern for the safety of National Guard members at recruiting facilities. Some legislators expressed concern regarding security after a recruiting facility was attacked in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Washington is not immune from these threats, and the Adjutant General has found there have been credible threats targeting recruiting facilities

in this state. This bill will increase the security through providing barriers, body armor, and other equipment, in addition to armed guards. The National Guard protects us, and the state should protect them.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) Members of the National Guard sacrifice their time and energy to serve the citizens of Washington, but their uniforms make them a target. There have been instances of threats and surveillance of National Guard facilities in Washington. The National Guard has taken those threats seriously by enhancing security with the use of federal funds, but more can be done. Ultimately, these facilities are state facilities, and the National Guard would benefit from additional security measures provided through the state.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Wilson, prime sponsor.

(Other) Curt Simonson, Washington National Guard.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.