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SENATE BILL 5650

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State of Washington                      65th Legislature                      2017 Regular Session

By Senators Conway, Darneille, Zeiger, and O'Ban

Read first time 02/01/17. Referred to Committee on Law & Justice.

1            AN ACT Relating to creating the safe streets pilot project;  
2 adding a new section to chapter 43.330 RCW; creating a new section;  
3 and providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5            NEW SECTION.        **Sec. 1.**        The legislature finds that community  
6 engagement is a foundational principle of successful community  
7 policing. When individuals are encouraged to partner with law  
8 enforcement, a powerful alliance can be built on mutual trust and  
9 respect to achieve their shared goals of improving safety and quality  
10 of life, identifying priorities in need of law enforcement resources,  
11 and further ensuring that services are tailored to the needs of local  
12 communities.

13            The legislature recognizes current efforts in Washington to  
14 mobilize communities to insist on accountable and engaged public  
15 safety and to establish cooperative lines of communication between  
16 civilians and law enforcement, including the laudable efforts of the  
17 safe streets campaign in Pierce county to reverse crime trends by  
18 engaging the community and law enforcement in cooperative efforts to  
19 improve public safety.

20            The legislature intends to foster efforts to promote community  
21 engagement through the creation of the safe streets pilot project.

1 The safe streets pilot project will facilitate the empowerment of  
2 communities to engage in crime prevention efforts through neighborhood  
3 organizing, law enforcement-community partnerships, neighborhood  
4 watch programs, youth mobilization, and business engagement. The  
5 legislature intends to use the safe streets pilot project to measure  
6 and examine the impact of safe streets initiatives on community  
7 engagement, criminal activity, and improved community-police  
8 relationships, and evaluate whether the safe streets initiative is a  
9 model for other communities to improve public safety.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.330  
11 RCW to read as follows:

12 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
13 specific purpose, the safe streets pilot project is created in the  
14 department for the purpose of fostering community engagement through  
15 neighborhood organizing, law enforcement-community partnerships,  
16 neighborhood watch programs, youth mobilization, and business  
17 engagement. The department shall administer the pilot project. The  
18 pilot project must include one grant award to an eligible applicant,  
19 which must be selected and receiving grant funds by November 1, 2017.  
20 The department shall adopt policies and procedures necessary to  
21 administer the pilot project, including for the: (a) Application  
22 process; (b) disbursement of the grant award to the selected  
23 applicant; (c) tracking compliance and proper use of funds; and (d)  
24 measuring outcomes.

25 (2) An eligible applicant:

26 (a) Is a public agency or nongovernmental organization, and is  
27 not a law enforcement agency;

28 (b) Is located in a charter county located west of the crest of  
29 the Cascade mountains with a population between seven hundred  
30 thousand and one million that also contains a city with a population  
31 of more than one hundred seventy-five thousand;

32 (c) Has prior experience with safe streets initiatives or police-  
33 community engagement;

34 (d) Has established or is willing to establish a coordinated  
35 effort with committed partners, which must include law enforcement;  
36 and

37 (e) Has established priorities, policies, and measurable goals in  
38 compliance with the requirements of subsection (3) of this section.

39 (3) The grant recipient shall:

1 (a) Lead and facilitate neighborhood organizing initiatives,  
2 including: (i) Empowering community members with tools, skills,  
3 confidence, and connections to identify, eradicate, and prevent  
4 illegal activity; (ii) making neighborhood improvements to deter  
5 future criminal activity; and (iii) educating community members  
6 regarding how to connect with city, county, and law enforcement  
7 resources;

8 (b) Build substantive law enforcement-community partnerships,  
9 including: (i) Building trust between law enforcement and residents  
10 by facilitating purposeful interactions and providing opportunities  
11 to clarify misunderstandings; (ii) establishing ongoing communication  
12 with law enforcement through a clearly defined process; (iii)  
13 facilitating dialogue between law enforcement and residents to  
14 resolve historical and current conflicts; (iv) informing law  
15 enforcement, through presentations, workshops, or forums, on  
16 community perceptions of law enforcement and public safety issues;  
17 (v) educating residents on the role and function of law enforcement  
18 in the community; (vi) clarifying expectations of law enforcement and  
19 of the role of the community in crime prevention; (vii) educating  
20 residents on the best practices for reporting emergency and  
21 nonemergency activities; (viii) recognizing residents for effective  
22 engagement and community leadership; and (ix) recognizing law  
23 enforcement officials for efforts to engage underrepresented  
24 communities, improve community engagement and empowerment, and reform  
25 law enforcement practices;

26 (c) Educate residents on and, when appropriate, foster  
27 neighborhood watch programs aimed at providing timely and detailed  
28 information to law enforcement so they can respond quickly, and  
29 creating positive connections among neighbors and law enforcement  
30 through community engagement;

31 (d) Mobilize youth in the community, especially high school and  
32 middle school age youth, by: (i) Helping them develop knowledge and  
33 skills to serve as leaders in their communities; (ii) focusing on  
34 prevention of violence and substance abuse; and (iii) empowering  
35 youth to directly affect change through bringing youth voices to the  
36 table;

37 (e) Engage businesses to help prevent crimes, such as vandalism  
38 and burglaries, through safety training and other prevention  
39 initiatives;

1 (f) Identify and maintain consistent, experienced, and committed  
2 leadership for managing the grant, including an administrator who  
3 acts as an available point of contact with the department; and

4 (g) Collect and report data and information required by the  
5 department.

6 (4) The department shall, in consultation with the Washington  
7 state institute for public policy, develop reporting guidelines for  
8 the grant recipient in order to measure whether the safe streets  
9 pilot project had an impact on crime rates and community engagement  
10 with, and perceptions of, law enforcement. The department shall  
11 submit a preliminary report to the legislature with details on the  
12 selected grant recipient and the reporting guidelines by January 1,  
13 2018. The department shall submit a final report on the safe streets  
14 pilot project, including an analysis of the reported data required  
15 under this subsection, by December 1, 2019.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act expires July 1, 2020.

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