

SSB 6570 - H COMM AMD

By Committee on Health Care & Wellness

ADOPTED 03/05/2020

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that law
4 enforcement officers respond to and witness some of the most tragic
5 events that happen in our communities. On-the-job stress can have a
6 significant impact on their physical and mental well-being and can
7 accumulate over the course of a career.

8 (2) Research indicates that law enforcement officers experience
9 key risk factors for suicides, including exposure to trauma, alcohol
10 use, availability of firearms, and the strains of shift work.
11 Compared to the general population, law enforcement officers report
12 much higher rates of depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and
13 other anxiety-related mental health conditions. These health
14 conditions have a significant impact on the officers and their
15 families.

16 (3) A 2019 report from the United States department of justice
17 found that, nationally, law enforcement suicides are 28.2 per one
18 hundred thousand for men and 12.2 per one hundred thousand for women.
19 A 2018 report by the Ruderman family foundation found that law
20 enforcement officers are one and one-half times more likely to die by
21 suicide than the general population.

22 (4) Despite these significant risk factors, there is no central
23 repository of comprehensive data regarding law enforcement officer
24 suicides. As a result, there are no comprehensive tools available to
25 law enforcement agencies to develop effective suicide prevention
26 strategies, or to know whether those strategies are making a
27 difference.

28 (5) Although Washington state has conducted significant work
29 towards suicide prevention more broadly, there is not a current
30 statewide program that provides comprehensive, evidence-based mental

1 health and suicide prevention resources for law enforcement and their
2 families.

3 (6) The legislature finds that there is an urgent need to develop
4 resources and interventions specifically targeted at helping law
5 enforcement and their family members manage their behavioral health
6 needs.

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1)(a) The department of health shall
8 convene a task force on law enforcement officer mental health and
9 wellness in Washington state with members as provided in this
10 subsection:

11 (i) The secretary of health, or the secretary's designee;

12 (ii) The chief of the Washington state patrol, or the chief's
13 designee;

14 (iii) The director of the health care authority, or the
15 director's designee;

16 (iv) The secretary of the department of corrections, or the
17 secretary's designee;

18 (v) A representative from the University of Washington's
19 forefront suicide prevention program;

20 (vi) The executive director of the criminal justice training
21 commission, or the director's designee;

22 (vii) A psychiatrist;

23 (viii) A representative of local public health;

24 (ix) One representative each from:

25 (A) The Washington council of police and sheriffs;

26 (B) The Washington state fraternal order of police;

27 (C) The council of metropolitan police and sheriffs;

28 (D) The Washington state patrol troopers association;

29 (E) The Washington state patrol lieutenants and captains
30 association;

31 (F) Tribal law enforcement;

32 (G) The Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs;

33 (H) An association representing community behavioral health
34 agencies;

35 (I) An association representing mental health providers; and

36 (J) An association representing substance use disorder treatment
37 providers.

38 (b) The representative from the department of health shall serve
39 as the chair of the task force.

1 (c) At a minimum, the task force shall meet quarterly.

2 (2) The task force shall review the following issues and
3 information:

4 (a) Data related to the behavioral health status of law
5 enforcement officers, including suicide rates, substance abuse rates,
6 posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, availability of behavioral
7 health services, and utilization of behavioral health services;

8 (b) Factors unique to the law enforcement community that affect
9 the behavioral health of persons working in law enforcement,
10 including factors affecting suicide rates;

11 (c) Components that should be addressed in the behavioral health
12 and suicide prevention pilot program established in section 3 of this
13 act, including consideration of components that relate to similar
14 programs funded or partially funded by the bureau of justice
15 assistance and the national institute of justice;

16 (d) The recommendations of the Washington state department of
17 health's suicide prevention plan and the applicability of the plan's
18 recommendations to law enforcement mental health issues;

19 (e) The recommendations of the United States department of
20 justice 2019 report to congress on law enforcement mental health and
21 wellness; and

22 (f) Options to improve the behavioral health status of and reduce
23 prevalent mental health issues and the suicide risk among law
24 enforcement officers and their families.

25 (3) Staff support for the task force shall be provided by the
26 department of health.

27 (4) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations
28 to the governor and relevant committees of the legislature by
29 December 1, 2021, including a summary of:

30 (a) The data to be reviewed described in subsection (2) of this
31 section;

32 (b) The results of the pilot projects funded by this act and
33 recommendations regarding the continuation of those programs;

34 (c) The best practices and policies for providing mental health
35 services and preventing law enforcement suicides; and

36 (d) Recommendations on resources and technical assistance to
37 support law enforcement agencies in preventing law enforcement
38 suicides.

39 (5) This section expires July 1, 2022.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) Subject to the availability of amounts
2 appropriated for this specific purpose not to exceed three hundred
3 thousand dollars per fiscal year, the Washington association of
4 sheriffs and police chiefs shall establish three pilot projects to
5 support behavioral health improvement and suicide prevention efforts
6 for law enforcement officers.

7 (2) The Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs
8 shall establish a competitive grant program to award funding for the
9 three pilot projects by September 1, 2020.

10 (3) Law enforcement associations and agencies are eligible to
11 compete for grant funding.

12 (4) The following programs and activities are eligible for grant
13 funding:

14 (a) Public information and wellness promotion campaigns;

15 (b) Embedded mental health professionals;

16 (c) Peer support programs;

17 (d) Resiliency training programs; and

18 (e) Critical incident stress management programs.

19 (5) Grantees must provide a report to the association on the
20 results of their program by October 1, 2021. The association must
21 provide the information to the officer mental health and wellness
22 task force established in section 2 of this act, for incorporation in
23 the December 1, 2021, report to the governor and relevant committees
24 of the legislature."

25 Correct the title.

EFFECT: Adds the Director of the Health Care Authority, or the
Director's designee, to the Task Force on Law Enforcement Officer
Mental Health and Wellness.

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