

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2926

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to expanding access to critical incident stress management programs.

Brief Description: Expanding access to critical incident stress management programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Maycumber, Blake, Kretz, MacEwen, Van Werven, Mosbrucker, Graham, Hoff, Griffey, Stokesbary, Chambers, Ybarra, Dent, Barkis, Goehner, Chandler, Kraft, Goodman, Lovick, Ortiz-Self, Senn, Gildon, Sells, Boehnke, Davis, Smith, Dye, Orwall, Eslick, Shewmake, Pollet, Riccelli and Harris.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/8/20 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/13/20, 97-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 3/6/20, 48-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs to inventory current critical incident stress management programs in Washington and expand access to such programs for law enforcement entities.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 31 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Robinson, 1st Vice Chair; Bergquist, 2nd Vice Chair; Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Rude, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Chandler, Chopp, Cody, Dolan, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Hansen, Hoff, Hudgins, Kilduff, Kraft, Macri, Mosbrucker, Pettigrew, Pollet, Ryu, Schmick, Senn, Steele, Sullivan, Sutherland, Tarleton, Tharinger and Ybarra.

Staff: Yvonne Walker (786-7841).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) is a statewide independent organization consisting of executive and management personnel from law enforcement agencies. Membership includes sheriffs, police chiefs, the Washington State Patrol, the Department of Corrections, and representatives of a number of federal agencies.

The WASPC is also a statutory entity and currently receives state funding to manage certain statewide programs, such as the Jail Booking and Reporting System. Additionally, it has been given administrative responsibility for several state-funded grant programs including: grant programs addressing gang crime; graffiti and tagging abatement; denied firearm purchase attempts; sexual assault kits; metal theft; and mental health field response.

Critical incidents generally involve an event that lies outside the range of usual human experience. It has the potential to exhaust one's usual coping mechanisms, resulting in psychological distress and disruption of normal adaptive functioning. Critical incident stress management (CISM) programs help to address issues of secondary traumatization and include but are not limited to: peer support counseling; crisis intervention; traumatic incident reduction; and stress management.

Summary of Bill:

Subject to appropriation, the WASPC must conduct outreach and coordinate with local law enforcement agencies to expand CISM programs to law enforcement personnel throughout Washington. The WASPC:

- must conduct an inventory of the current CISM programs in the state, including an assessment of underserved agencies and regions;
- must coordinate with law enforcement entities and community partners to provide greater access to CISM programs, including peer support group counselors; and
- may assist such agencies with establishing interagency and regional service agreements to facilitate expansion of CISM programs.

The WASPC must prepare a preliminary report on its findings by July 1, 2021. A final report with a summary of the inventory and efforts to expand CISM programs must be submitted to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature by July 1, 2022.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S):

The Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC), rather than the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, is required to conduct the duties outlined in the act. In addition, the CJTC must work with fire departments and other first responders in order to inventory current critical incident stress management programs in Washington and for the purpose of expanding such programs to law enforcement, firefighters, and other first responders statewide.

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) This bill will support necessary services that can help officers in some of the challenges they face. Officers are often exposed to unfortunate experiences while providing public safety services that everyone depends on. This is a unique group that must rise to the call to help citizens every day. This bill is a good step in providing the services that officers are more likely to take advantage of and use. Awareness of officer health and wellness has increased within the Legislature. The enactment of this bill, along with several other bills, will help Washington become a national leader in supporting law enforcement health and wellness programs.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Jeff DeVere, Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs; and Michael Transue, Washington Fraternal Order of Police.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.