

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6570

66th Legislature
2020 Regular Session

Passed by the Senate March 9, 2020
Yeas 48 Nays 0

President of the Senate

Passed by the House March 5, 2020
Yeas 97 Nays 0

**Speaker of the House of
Representatives**

Approved

Governor of the State of Washington

CERTIFICATE

I, Brad Hendrickson, Secretary of the Senate of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6570** as passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on the dates hereon set forth.

Secretary

FILED

**Secretary of State
State of Washington**

SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6570

AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

Passed Legislature - 2020 Regular Session

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Senate Behavioral Health Subcommittee to Health & Long Term Care
(originally sponsored by Senators King, Saldaña, Wagoner, Lovelett,
and Wilson, C.)

READ FIRST TIME 02/07/20.

1 AN ACT Relating to law enforcement officer mental health and
2 wellness; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

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

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

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

17 (3) A 2019 report from the United States department of justice
18 found that, nationally, law enforcement suicides are 28.2 per one
19 hundred thousand for men and 12.2 per one hundred thousand for women.
20 A 2018 report by the Ruderman family foundation found that law

1 enforcement officers are one and one-half times more likely to die by
2 suicide than the general population.

3 (4) Despite these significant risk factors, there is no central
4 repository of comprehensive data regarding law enforcement officer
5 suicides. As a result, there are no comprehensive tools available to
6 law enforcement agencies to develop effective suicide prevention
7 strategies, or to know whether those strategies are making a
8 difference.

9 (5) Although Washington state has conducted significant work
10 towards suicide prevention more broadly, there is not a current
11 statewide program that provides comprehensive, evidence-based mental
12 health and suicide prevention resources for law enforcement and their
13 families.

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

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

- 22 (i) The secretary of health, or the secretary's designee;
- 23 (ii) The chief of the Washington state patrol, or the chief's
24 designee;
- 25 (iii) The director of the health care authority, or the
26 director's designee;
- 27 (iv) The secretary of the department of corrections, or the
28 secretary's designee;
- 29 (v) A representative from the University of Washington's
30 forefront suicide prevention program;
- 31 (vi) The executive director of the criminal justice training
32 commission, or the director's designee;
- 33 (vii) A psychiatrist;
- 34 (viii) A representative of local public health;
- 35 (ix) One representative each from:
 - 36 (A) The Washington council of police and sheriffs;
 - 37 (B) The Washington state fraternal order of police;
 - 38 (C) The council of metropolitan police and sheriffs;
 - 39 (D) The Washington state patrol troopers association;

1 (E) The Washington state patrol lieutenants and captains
2 association;

3 (F) Tribal law enforcement;

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

5 (H) An association representing community behavioral health
6 agencies;

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

8 (J) An association representing substance use disorder treatment
9 providers.

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

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

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

15 (a) Data related to the behavioral health status of law
16 enforcement officers, including suicide rates, substance abuse rates,
17 posttraumatic stress disorder, depression, availability of behavioral
18 health services, and utilization of behavioral health services;

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

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

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

30 (e) The recommendations of the United States department of
31 justice 2019 report to congress on law enforcement mental health and
32 wellness; and

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

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

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

- 1 (a) The data to be reviewed described in subsection (2) of this
2 section;
- 3 (b) The results of the pilot projects funded by this act and
4 recommendations regarding the continuation of those programs;
- 5 (c) The best practices and policies for providing mental health
6 services and preventing law enforcement suicides; and
- 7 (d) Recommendations on resources and technical assistance to
8 support law enforcement agencies in preventing law enforcement
9 suicides.
- 10 (5) This section expires July 1, 2022.

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

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

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

22 (4) The following programs and activities are eligible for grant
23 funding:

- 24 (a) Public information and wellness promotion campaigns;
- 25 (b) Embedded mental health professionals;
- 26 (c) Peer support programs;
- 27 (d) Resiliency training programs; and
- 28 (e) Critical incident stress management programs.

29 (5) Grantees must provide a report to the association on the
30 results of their program by October 1, 2021. The association must
31 provide the information to the officer mental health and wellness
32 task force established in section 2 of this act, for incorporation in
33 the December 1, 2021, report to the governor and relevant committees
34 of the legislature.

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