

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1989

As of February 20, 2024

Title: An act relating to a graffiti abatement and reduction program.

Brief Description: Concerning a graffiti abatement and reduction pilot program.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Barkis, Low, Jacobsen, Graham, Sandlin, Bergquist, Robertson and Hutchins).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/10/24, 96-1.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/20/24.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Graffiti Abatement and Reduction Pilot Program within the Department of Transportation.
- Expires the pilot program on July 1, 2025.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Megan Tudor (786-7478)

Background: Under current law, graffiti may be classified as malicious mischief in the third, second, or first degree, dependent on the extent of the damage inflicted to the property of another. Malicious mischief "physical damage," in addition to its ordinary meaning, also includes any diminution in the value of any property as the consequence of an act and the cost to repair any physical damage. If more than one item of property is physically damaged as a result of activities by a person and the physical damage to the property would, separately, constitute mischief in the third degree because of the value, then the value of the damages may be grouped into one count.

In 2008, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs were directed to

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establish a grant program to assist local law enforcement agencies in graffiti and tagging abatement programs located in local communities, when funded.

Summary of Bill: Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the Department of Transportation (WSDOT) must create a graffiti abatement and reduction pilot program that includes, but is not limited to:

- field testing spray drone technology for efficiency of painting over existing graffiti; and
- investigation and testing of system improvements to identify persons who damage property with graffiti.

WSDOT is directed to test the systems above and additional graffiti prevention techniques prioritizing the I-5 Puget Sound region from Tacoma to Seattle and the North Spokane Corridor. A report must be submitted to the appropriate legislative committees by December 1, 2024. The report must include pilot program use of funding, results of actions used to identify people who damaged property with graffiti, and field testing of spray drones.

The pilot program expires July 1, 2025.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO. This bill creates a very unique way to cleanup along the state's highways and other parts of the state's infrastructure. The bill starts a pilot program particularly along I-5 between Tacoma and Seattle. Many of us have traveled that stretch of I-5 and are also probably tired of seeing graffiti along that route. This legislation includes the use of drones in assisting with painting over graffiti, which keeps state maintenance workers safe while completing this work. Any practical tools that can be used to keep these workers safe should be utilized.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Anthony Mixer, Conservative Advocate.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.