



January 26, 2024

Greetings from your Executive Director:

Here are a few updates, including some of our legislative priorities, this week:

[Senate Bill 6200](#) is the “fleeing vehicles” bill intended to be one of the two parts of an equation to send a much stronger message that the days of simply driving away are coming to an end. The bill has strong bipartisan support – in summary this bill provides:

- procedures for the seizure, impoundment and forfeiture of vehicles used in the crime of Attempting to Elude a Police Vehicle;
- requires offenders, including juveniles, charged with Attempting to Elude a Police Vehicle or Resisting Arrest to be placed on electronic monitoring when released from custody at arraignment or trial;
- provides that a person convicted of Attempting to Elude a Police Vehicle as an adult must be sentenced to one year of community custody, supervised by the Department of Corrections, and be placed on electronic monitoring for the duration of the community custody; and
- requires supervision for 18 months for a juvenile convicted of Attempting to Elude a Police Vehicle.

We are also working with legislators to increase funding for technology such as Flock cameras, regional crime labs including rapid DNA, and access to red light cameras to better locate, arrest and charge persons eluding police.

The second part of the equation is to allow more flexibility whether to pursue and eliminate the “bright line” that criminals are exploiting. The overall goal is to reduce pursuits, and people eluding and driving recklessly in the first place. Here [KUOW - WA lawmakers consider whether to tweak or repeal laws governing police chases](#) is a story from KUOW in Seattle this week about this issue.

We are working on the two major funding bills that could create a long-term, substantive change to our decade-long status as the state with the lowest staffing in the nation (and getting worse- a net loss of 600 officers in the last two years).

[HB 2231](#) would authorize cities and counties to impose a tax credited against the state sales and use tax for the purpose of attracting and retaining law enforcement officers. It would divert funds from existing sales taxes from the state to the local governments, and 50

percent must be used to hire sworn officers and deputies. This bill does not raise prices at the cash register.

[HB 2211](#) provides a county legislative authority until January 1, 2027, to impose a criminal justice sales and use tax without voter approval, and provides a city within a county that has not imposed the sales and use tax at the full rate by July 1, 2024, until January 1, 2027, to legislatively impose the remainder of the tax up to the full rate. The bill also adds co-responder and diversion treatment services to the definition of criminal justice purposes for which a second sales and use tax can be used. This bill does require a local sales tax increase.

Both bills were heard in the House last week, and here <https://www.tvw.org/watch/?clientID=9375922947&eventID=2024011326&startStreamAt=5098&stopStreamAt=5210> is the excellent testimony of Puyallup Chief Scott Engle. We support both bills and emphasize that funding will assist in responses to public safety concerns, allow for better de-escalation by “teaming up and slowing down” when appropriate, provide better supervision, allow for necessary training, as well as allow for decompression time which is necessary for officer wellness. These bills are a heavy lift, as we have legislators who either do not want to fund law enforcement, don’t want to raise taxes as required in HB 2211, or don’t want the state to give up any of its budget money. We hope you can communicate with your legislators if you feel these are necessary and important bills. We sent this (Letter PDF) letter to legislators on Jan. 26 and feel free to use as you feel appropriate.

This week I appeared on TVW’s “The Impact” [The Impact - ACLU and WASPC on 2024 Law Enforcement Legislation - TVW](#) to discuss legislative issues, including funding and fleeing vehicles, with Enoka Herat of the WA ACLU.

I previously sent out a GTWO, that the [US Supreme Court](#) has agreed to hear the [Grants Pass v. Johnson](#) case, which is related to the Martin v. Boise case and local burdens on managing these issues. WASPC had provided an [amicus brief](#) asking, along with other organizations, for the Court to take up the case. We will keep you advised on the case as it progresses through the process. Here [The Supreme Court will decide whether local anti-homeless laws are ‘cruel and unusual’](#) is a story on the case and the issues.

We had sent a letter to the Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) a few months ago regarding the overly broad definition of “initial decertifying decision” and requirements for notification. I received this message from the CJTC Asst Director Kim Bliss, who is managing certification issues and has been in consistent communication with us: *Just an FYI that the work on rectifying the definition of “initial disciplinary decision” and the notification requirements has been temporarily put on the back burner as I deal with reviewing and responding with the numerous*

proposed bills affecting CJTC, including certification. Right now, it seems like most (but certainly not all) agencies are continuing to comply in good faith, so I don't think a delay is problematic. But please let me know if you or your stakeholders disagree.

We are excited to welcome soon-to-be retired Kennewick Police Commander Randy Maynard, who will begin working with us on February 1st as the Asst. Director of Professional Services. Randy's 34 years of law enforcement experience, along with his previous volunteer work with WASPC as an accreditation manager, mentor, assessor and commissioner will help our efforts in serving our accredited agencies along with developing future accredited agencies – especially those on the east side of our state. Randy will be working closely with Professional Services Director David Doll with Accreditation, Accreditation Assessments, LEMAPs and Leadership Development.

Attached is a (PDF) report issued recently by the COPS Office and the National Policing Institute regarding “Considerations for Specialized Units”. It speaks directly to the need for adequate staffing, backgrounding, active supervision, and monitoring of specialized units to ensure everyone commits to never allowing a repeat of the tragic example at Memphis P.D. involving the death of Tyre Nichols.

Stay safe and thanks for all you do- Steve