



Washington Association of
**SHERIFFS &
POLICE CHIEFS**

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April 29, 2025

Greetings from your Executive Director:

Here are a few updates now that the legislative session is over as of Sunday, April 27:

Police Funding – [HB 2015](#)

The legislature passed HB 2015 and it is awaiting action by the Governor; it is fully expected he will sign it. We have gone over elements of the bill during our legislative webinars, but for those of you who did not attend, here is some background. The legislature has been reluctant to support any kind of funding for local law enforcement. Proposals in previous sessions to address Washington's last place standing in police staffing didn't go anywhere. This year, Gov. Ferguson said he would not sign a budget without \$100 million in funding for police. We would not be talking about any of this without that leadership, period.

HB 2015 is the bill with a lot of requirements that were aimed to make sure as few officers were actually funded by the bill as possible. It placed as many mandates, hurdles and strings as possible on any funds. The bill started from a preference that local governments should tax themselves, rather than receive state revenues. WASPC supports funds that focus on police officers and deputies, and to reduce the onerous hurdles and strings as much as possible. While there were some significant positive changes to the bill, there are still an equally significant number of requirements that make getting any grant or implementing any tax pretty challenging. There are also specific provisions to mandate state training and policies for eligibility, including many that are at the center of current intense political opinion, including immigration and social justice issues. I cannot say that this bill, if signed and funded, will create significant on-the-street increases in staffing. It's a first step, a positive sign that our state lawmakers are actually going to do something to support funds for public safety, and a basis for potential improvements in the future. Again, the leadership of the Governor has been critical to this effort.

[Here](#) is an overview of the requirements of the bill, and [here](#) is the same document with my comments about each requirement highlighted in red to help you better understand each of these provisions. In addition, [here](#) is the statement we sent out last week following the passage of the bill in the Senate.

Serving the Law Enforcement Community and the Citizens of Washington

I have spoken to Chiefs and Sheriffs and comments range from those who can't wait to apply and have no issues dealing with the requirements, to those who see way too many impediments and have little interest at all, to those who would see very small amounts of a sales tax because of the low tax base of their jurisdiction, and everything in between. Any framework would potentially allow us to work to resolve or improve some of these issues in the future. The state providing funds is something we would not have predicted just a few years ago. Stay tuned, I guess.

State Budget and Byrne/JAG and Multijurisdictional Task Forces

As many of you know, the Commerce Dept. under the previous Governor moved Byrne/JAG funding away from drug trafficking task forces to community-based prevention efforts, over our general objections, but the legislature backfilled those funds from their budget. The first wave of budgets had the task force funding in one chamber but not the other, so we were waiting to find out how the final budget came out. The final budget (again, not signed by the Governor yet but here is the status) removed that task force funding. We have already strongly communicated to the state Commerce Dept. that they should immediately reverse course and fund the task forces, and that now is not a time to reduce task forces in the midst of a fentanyl crisis. In addition, we do not feel that removing existing task forces would be consistent with the Governor's focus on public safety, or what is best for our communities. Feel free to express your opinion to your Mayors, Council and Commissions, and anyone else, to raise the level of concern over this budgetary cut.

Brady List

[Here](#) is an Attorney General's opinion, requested by the Island County Prosecuting Attorney, regarding when officers who have been placed on the Brady list can be potentially removed from it. The opinion does not directly answer the question from what we can tell.

WASPC Board Openings

For the May conference, we will have the following WASPC Board positions open for election:

- Vice President (Must be a Sheriff; this board position goes into the VP-Pres Elect-Pres-Past Pres sequence once elected)
- Sheriff-At-Large (currently Cowlitz Co Sheriff Thurman; he has indicated he does not wish to run for another term and wants others to have a chance to serve)
- Chief-At-Large (currently Union Gap Chief Cobb; he has indicated he wishes to run for the position and continue to serve)

For openings for Sheriffs, please let WSSA President Crider know if you are interested so the WSSA can forward names, as has been our practice. For Chief's openings, please let me or Chief Lowe know if you wish to run so we can let members know prior to the conference. Any questions, please let Chief Lowe or I know.

Thanks again for all you do, and stay safe- Steve