



Washington State Legislature

January 13, 2023

The Honorable Governor Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Governor Inslee,

We, legislators representing Southwest Washington, are writing to express our full support for the establishment of new regional law enforcement training centers around the state and urge you to consider building the first one in Southwest Washington.

As you know, Washington has the lowest per capita rate of commissioned law enforcement officers in the country, and the lowest rate in our state's recorded history, since the Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs (WASPC) began tracking this data in 1980.

In 2020, Washington had 11,231 full-time commissioned officers. In 2021, that number dwindled to 10,736 – representing a 4.4% decline. Meanwhile, our state's population continues to grow at a brisk pace and the rate of both violent and property crimes remains high.

Tragically, between 2020 and 2021, the rate of violent crime increased by 12.3%, and WASPC reported the highest number of murders on record.

To address this crisis, we agree with your administration that Washington needs more trained law enforcement officers; a sentiment advocated by House and Senate Republicans for many years.

Currently, new recruits are forced to wait months before even beginning their training at the Criminal Justice Training Commission. With only one training center location in Burien, many recruits must relocate far from their communities and families.

We believe Southwest Washington – as one of the fastest growing regions of our state – is an ideal location to train the next generation of law enforcement officers.

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Thank you for your consideration on this urgent matter. We look forward to continue the efforts to recruit, train, and retain law enforcement officers throughout Washington State.

Sincerely,



Sen. Lynda Wilson
17th Legislative District



Rep. Kevin Waters
17th Legislative District



Rep. Paul Harris
17th Legislative District



Sen. Ann Rivers
18th Legislative District



Rep. Greg Cheney
18th Legislative District



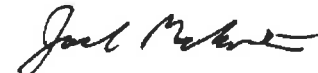
Rep. Stephanie McClintock
18th Legislative District



Sen. Jeff Wilson
19th Legislative District



Rep. Jim Walsh
19th Legislative District



Rep. Joel McEntire
19th Legislative District



Sen. John Braun
20th Legislative District



Rep. Peter Abbarno
20th Legislative District



Rep. Ed Orcutt
20th Legislative District