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HOUSE BILL 2539

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State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

**By** Representatives Maycumber, Lovick, Klippert, Chapman, Lekanoff, Corry, Stonier, Irwin, MacEwen, Frame, Walsh, Harris, Dent, Griffey, Barkis, Graham, Goehner, Chambers, Mosbrucker, Riccelli, and Blake

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing a law enforcement professional  
2 development outreach grant program; creating new sections; and  
3 providing an expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that recruiting  
6 and retaining law enforcement officers is a significant challenge  
7 faced by law enforcement agencies across the state. There are many  
8 causes, including salary, high attrition, and generational shifts in  
9 the workplace. However, community distrust of law enforcement has  
10 also made the profession less desirable for new and qualified  
11 candidates. It is paramount for law enforcement agencies to bridge  
12 these gaps with the community to both improve external relations and  
13 advance recruitment and retention efforts.

14 Law enforcement agencies should reflect the demographics of the  
15 communities they serve. A dynamic, diverse, community-oriented police  
16 force will improve external relations and therefore ensure the  
17 effective delivery of services to the public. Therefore, the  
18 legislature hereby establishes a grant program for local law  
19 enforcement agencies to engage in innovative outreach efforts  
20 designed to promote a diverse police force reflective of local  
21 communities.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    (1) Subject to the availability of amounts  
2 appropriated for this specific purpose, the criminal justice training  
3 commission shall develop and implement a law enforcement professional  
4 development outreach grant program for the purpose of encouraging a  
5 broader diversity of candidates from underrepresented groups and  
6 communities to seek careers in law enforcement.

7        (2) Grants must be awarded to local law enforcement agencies  
8 based on locally developed proposals. Two or more agencies may submit  
9 a joint proposal for a multijurisdictional project. A proposal must  
10 include a specific plan for encouraging persons from underrepresented  
11 groups and communities to seek careers in law enforcement. The  
12 commission shall establish policies for applications under this  
13 section in addition to criteria for evaluating and selecting grant  
14 recipients. To the extent possible, at least one grant recipient  
15 agency should be from the east side of the state and one from the  
16 west side of the state, with the crest of the Cascades being the  
17 dividing line. No single grant award may exceed sixty thousand  
18 dollars. The commission shall select grant recipients and begin  
19 distributing funds no later than December 1, 2020.

20        (3) The commission shall submit a report to the governor and the  
21 appropriate committees of the legislature on the grant program no  
22 later than December 1, 2021. The report must include a summary of the  
23 grant recipients, use of funds, and any potential impact on  
24 anticipated recruitment.

25        (4) This section expires July 1, 2022.

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