



Washington Association of  
**SHERIFFS &  
POLICE CHIEFS**

3060 Willamette Drive NE  
Lacey, WA 98516  
360-486-2380 (Phone)  
360-486-2381 (Fax)  
www.waspc.org

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Statement attribution:  
Steven D. Strachan, Executive Director

**WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS AND POLICE CHIEFS**  
**Support of SB 5068 – Law Enforcement Employment**

The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) supports SB 5068. It would require every person seeking employment as a Washington law enforcement officer (whether a citizen, a lawful permanent resident, DACA recipient, VISA holder, or non-citizen US nationals) to meet all existing qualifications to be employed as a law enforcement officer. Non-US citizens have been authorized to be Washington law enforcement officers since 2018.

The applicants must be among the top scorers in the civil service examination, including the written examination and physical examination, pass an extensive background investigation, polygraph examination, psychological evaluation, oral board interviews, complete the Basic Law Enforcement Academy, and all local training and probation requirements. Every officer also swears an oath to uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Washington, and every law enforcement officer is subject to de-certification under criteria established by the state. Nothing in current law or SB 5068 requires any law enforcement agency to hire a non-citizen over a citizen.

WASPC has strived to expand the potential pool of candidates for law enforcement officers without lowering our standards. Our communities deserve highly qualified public servants as law enforcement officers. We will continue to take all reasonable and appropriate steps to help people be safe and feel safe and hire officers based on their merits, not what country they were born in.

This proposal has the potential to increase the number of law enforcement recruits across Washington. We desperately need more officers as Washington continues to rank 51<sup>st</sup> in the nation for the number of law enforcement per capita.

Understaffed and under resourced law enforcement agencies affect crime prevention, response time to 911 calls, and increases stress on our remaining police officers. De-escalation, proactive policing, and appropriate supervision require resources to “team up and slow down.” Every community deserves a public safety agency that is well-trained, well-equipped, and well-staffed to deliver the best public service. We support effective solutions to provide local governments with more resources for criminal justice services.

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