

# WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS & POLICE CHIEFS

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Serving the Law Enforcement Community and the Citizens of Washington



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Greetings from Your Executive Director:

I just wanted to drop a line for all of us on the status of I-940 and where we go from here. You all know the long history, so I won't recount all of it, but remember that the campaign and election was an outcome we didn't want, so it was a strange situation. Basically our position was that we were opposed, so we could *go to the legislature and change it back to the improved language of 3003*. The De-Escalate backers said vote yes, to send a strong message to the legislature that *they should go back and change it to the clarified language of 3003*. So- different messages but the same goal.

Once the Supreme Court put 940 on the ballot by itself, and understanding the likelihood of its passage, our goals have been :

- Respectful opposition based on concerns with the language as written especially the deadly force standard and the first aid requirements
- Avoid a divisive and negative campaign that decreases trust with our communities, and
- Make sure that whether the initiative passes or not, we reinforce that the agreed-upon language needs to be passed as soon as possible by the legislature.

The outcome last night is consistent with those goals—even though we were forced into a campaign anyway, for the most part it was generally not as negative as it could have been. We have also been able to maintain the good communications and relationships built with the initiative backers.

As I have mentioned the past few weeks, editorial endorsements opposing or supporting 940 all focused on the legislature going back and passing the changes we agreed on. Just last week, WASPC along with WACOPS and FOP again indicated our commitment to the agreed-upon changes and sent those commitments to every legislator. The feedback we have gotten has been positive, and we will be looking to get the text of 3003 passed shortly after the legislature goes back into session. We have already communicated with legislative sponsors. Very notably, the public comments from the De-Escalate WA backers has reinforced their commitment to the legislative changes as well.

Here is the public statement we are putting out on social media today, and feel free to use as you wish:

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<b>RICK SCOTT</b> Sheriff—Grays Harbor County	<b>MARK COUEY</b> Director—OIC Criminal Investigations Unit	<b>JOHN BATISTE</b> Chief—WA State Patrol	<b>JAY TABB</b> SAC—FBI, Seattle	<b>STEVEN D. STRACHAN</b> Executive Director

*The passage of Initiative 940 begins a renewed effort by law enforcement to work with our community partners to enact previously agreed revisions to the new law. The legislature passed important clarifications to I-940 in the last session that were not included in the ballot measure approved by voters on November 6. That consensus language should become law, and we remain fully committed to working with the 2019 legislature to pass that language. Our focus, from day one, has been to reduce violent interactions and improve relationships with the community.*

Now that it has been passed, I-940 becomes law 30 days after the election- so, on or about Dec. 6. Any law change would necessarily not take place until after the New Year. So- state law will be based on 940 for a period of time, but we will work hard to get that changed as soon as possible. I would encourage all of us to remember that any prosecutorial review of an incident after Dec. 6, even under 940, is still based on good faith.

So- we are dealing with a lot of variables but the intention would be to move toward amending the law (which would require a 2/3 vote in the legislature) very soon after the first of the year. As always, we will keep you in the loop as this progresses. Our goals of better policy, improved relationships, and no highly charged and divisive campaign have been achieved, which is good, but we need to keep working on making sure the necessary changes we agreed on are passed by the legislature.

**Here is our ask: please let your State Senators and State Representatives know the changes are important and have the support of all the stakeholders. Please let our Policy Director, James McMahan ([james@waspc.org](mailto:james@waspc.org)) know if you get a commitment--**

Thanks again for all of your hard work on this critical issue- it is my honor to work with you!

Work Hard- Have Fun- Stay Safe

Steve

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