

WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS & POLICE CHIEFS

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Serving the Law Enforcement Community and the Citizens of Washington

January 18, 2019



Greetings from your Executive Director:

We will end this week with the current status of the **amendments to I-940** (940 Version 2.0?)-all of the stakeholders, including the De-Escalate backers, community groups, and law enforcement labor groups (WACOPS and FOP) as well as WASPC testified in the House and Senate committees this week. The very good news is that the legislature and the sponsors of the bill followed through on their commitment to make this one of the first bills heard once session started- they had their ceremony at noon and the bill was being heard in committee just 90 minutes later. Remember that an amendment to an initiative requires a 2/3 vote in the legislature, but there is strong support on both sides of the aisle for the changes. House Bill 1064 has been designated as the bill to pass the Legislature. Once that bill passes both chambers, it will be presented to the Governor for signature. The goal is to have it to the Governor for signing no later than February 1. That is extremely fast but we will keep you advised on the progress. Also be aware that the one and only change from last session's version of the amendments is that there is an **emergency provision**, which means it would become law as soon as the Governor signs it. I know that many of us are concerned about making sure the amended law goes into effect as soon as possible, so that is the current plan.

Here is a specific request of each of you: While the leadership of the legislature has done a good job of moving this quickly, we are also getting some feedback from individual legislators to the effect of "what's the big hurry, this does not seem like a big deal". It's a big deal because we are under the current 940 law and we definitely want that amended to the new language- as soon as possible. **Please contact your legislators and make it clear that this is important and we would appreciate the new version being passed right away- thank you.**

We appreciate WASPC President Chief Ken Thomas of Des Moines PD, WASPC President-Elect, and Washington State Sheriffs Association President, Sheriff John Snaza of Thurston County, and WASPC Vice President Chief Craig Meidl of Spokane all testifying on our behalf at the hearings. Here are the links to each hearing if you are interested:

House Hearing:

<https://www.tvw.org/watch/?eventID=2019011049>

Senate Hearing:

<https://www.tvw.org/watch/?eventID=2019011058>

President KEN THOMAS <i>Chief—Des Moines</i>	President Elect JOHN SNAZA <i>Sheriff—Thurston County</i>	Vice President CRAIG MEIDL <i>Chief—Spokane</i>	Past President BRIAN BURNETT <i>Sheriff—Chelan County</i>	Treasurer BRIAN WINTER <i>Sheriff—Yakima County</i>
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RICK SCOTT <i>Sheriff—Grays Harbor County</i>	MARK COUEY <i>Director—OIC</i> <i>Criminal Investigations Unit</i>	JOHN BATISTE <i>Chief—WA State Patrol</i>	JAY TABB <i>SAC—FBI, Seattle</i>	STEVEN D. STRACHAN <i>Executive Director</i>

As you know, we are committed to doing all we can to help the Criminal Justice Training Commission receive the necessary funding to shorten wait times for Basic Law Enforcement Academy classes. One of the bills to do just that has now been scheduled for next Monday (I know its a holiday but the legislature doesn't take those during session). House Bill 1253 ([link](#)) will be heard in the House Public Safety Committee Monday at 1:30 PM, and we would appreciate a few of our Sheriffs and Chiefs being able to testify if possible. This bill would shorten the amount of time the state has to commence BLEA training from within 6 months of hire date, to 2 months. If you are willing and able to come down and testify we would appreciate it, and please let James McMahan (James@waspc.org) or I know- thanks!

In our last newsletter I sent along a lengthy article about the **changing environment of firearms background checks**. I-1639 and the upcoming NICS change will impact us, and as I mentioned previously there is strong legislative interest in going to a "single point" firearms background check system, which I know some of our Chiefs and Sheriffs would oppose but it would likely happen anyway. We have been asked by some legislators if WASPC would consider, as an option, developing a separate entity that would serve this purpose. The idea would be that the state move from our current system, where local departments, NICS and Firearms dealers (FFLs) have a fragmented system, to a single place where all FFLs and applicants would have a "one stop shop", and all backgrounds would go one place. The legislature is interested in exploring whether that entity might be here- that way it would have an "arm's length" from the state and would have a separate board under WASPC.

We discussed this at length at our WASPC board meeting this week, and although it is not a perfect solution, and we would not be looking for it, we recognize that politically and in terms of balancing an effective system with Second Amendment rights, it might be the most preferred (or least negative?) outcome. We would also raise the fact that we need local input and feedback for backgrounds so the process would have the most contemporaneous information, and that there be input from our departments. So- we will explore it with stakeholders and keep you in the loop. No pun intended, but this is a moving target and we just don't want to be in the position of reacting to changes-- we want to be directly involved in any upcoming changes. Also, for the nearer future we will be putting together a small "working group" to provide some basic information and suggestions on how to help deal with the upcoming changes already occurring, knowing the legislature may create future major changes, but there will be a transition period. If you have questions or comments please feel free to give me a call.

As you know, our Jail Liaison, Ned Newlin, retired at the end of December. I am pleased to let you know we have selected John McGrath as the **new WASPC Jail Services Liaison**. John comes to our association from the Spokane County Jail. He's been with them since 2006 and has been their Jail Director since 2013. John will be primarily based in Eastern Washington, and will be visiting jails across the state frequently, working closely with the Mental Health Field Response Team grantees, and consulting our members on jail issues. We look forward to having a member of our team based in Eastern WA as we work to serve the entire state.

Congratulations to Franklin County **Sheriff Jim Raymond, who has been appointed to the WASPC Board** by President Thomas to complete the term of retired Sheriff Mark Nelson. We look forward to working with Sheriff Raymond.

Also, a reminder that the Board will be appointing a **new Treasurer** for the Board, to replace retiring Yakima County Sheriff Brain Winter. The Treasurer can be a Sheriff or a Chief, and if you are interested, please let Deb know by January 24.

Also, we need interested members to **serve as Chairs of a few key committees**- please let Deb Gregory (dgregory@waspc.org) know if you may be willing to serve or want more info. The committee charter can be accessed by clicking on the name of the committee below:

- [Grants Committee](#): We need a Chief to replace Bainbridge Island Chief Matt Hamner (Chief Hamner has accepted a Chief's position in Banning, CA)
- [LE Education & Training Committee](#): Need a Chief, also to replace Chief Hamner
- [Legislative Committee](#): Need a Sheriff to replace retired Jefferson County Sheriff Dave Stanko
- [Corrections Committee](#): Need a Jail Manager to replace John McGrath

If you have any questions at all about all these fast-moving topics please just ask- thanks for all you do!

Work Hard- Have Fun- Stay Safe

STEVE

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