



Legislation Text

File #: 2021-0421, **Version:** 1

Clerk 10/28/2021

A MOTION declaring a policy of the council to establish a neighborhood safety Learn and Educate; Assist and Develop; Engage and Recruit program led by the department of public safety.

WHEREAS, neighborhood watch programs have proven to be effective in reducing crime, with one of the earliest evaluations which showed that neighborhood crime was reduced in Seattle in 1977, and

WHEREAS, reductions were associated with some of the essential features of the neighborhood watch programs, and might serve to increase surveillance, reduce opportunities and enhance informal social control, and

WHEREAS, according to a study done by The Crime Prevention Research Review, most areas associated with a neighborhood watch pointed to lower levels of crime, and

WHEREAS, visible surveillance might reduce crime because of its deterrent effect on the perceptions and decision-making of potential offenders. Offenders might notice the spike in community surveillance and, in turn, decide not to strike or possibly target a different area, and

WHEREAS, a meta-analysis by professors Trevor Bennett, Katy Holloway and David Farrington published in The Campbell Collaboration Reviews of Intervention and Policy Evaluations, found that community watches were associated with a relative reduction in crime of about sixteen percent, and

WHEREAS, by forming a watch group, neighborhoods make it known that criminal activity will not be tolerated in the community and thereby make the community less attractive for potential criminals, and

WHEREAS, the program is simple and inexpensive, yet highly effective in the fight against crime.

Statistics indicate that communities with active neighborhood watch programs show a decrease in burglaries and related crimes, and

WHEREAS, given the increase in crime King County is currently experiencing, with the highest homicide rates in almost thirty years, and a dramatic increase in gun violence, residents should have the resources and support to form their own neighborhood watch programs should they desire to do so, and

WHEREAS, neighborhood safety programs allow active residents to initiate their own crime reduction program, which might give these residents a greater sense of personal safety;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. To address increases in criminal activity at the neighborhood level, it is the policy of the council that a program that empowers communities to establish and join neighborhood safety groups led by the department of public safety, is needed.

B. The council requests the executive fund and the sheriff establish a neighborhood safety Learn and Educate; Assist and Develop; Engage and Recruit ("LEADER") program.

C. The neighborhood safety LEADER program should consist of a community outreach manager who should serve as a point of contact and provide education and information to unincorporated area residents on starting a neighborhood safety LEADER group, including connecting residents interested in establishing or joining a neighborhood safety LEADER group and establishing "block watch captains," a process for unincorporated area residents to acquire neighborhood safety LEADER signs, and a process to facilitate crime prevention activities including, but not limited to, mobilizing neighborhood patrols, distributing crime prevention information and coordinating neighborhood clean-ups.

D. The sheriff is requested to seek state and federal grants to assist in the development of the neighborhood safety LEADER program and to assist unincorporated area residents in acquiring neighborhood safety LEADER signs and other neighborhood safety LEADER adornments.