



Legislation Text

File #: 2022-0159, **Version:** 1

Clerk 03/29/2022

A MOTION requesting the King County executive establish a marijuana retail security task force to develop strategies to prevent criminal activity targeting marijuana retailers and address security concerns at marijuana retail locations and to provide a report.

WHEREAS, King County has experienced an increase in criminal activity, including armed robbery, targeting marijuana retailers over the last year, and

WHEREAS, according to the Washington Cannabusiness Association, roughly seventy robberies have been recorded at marijuana retailers across the state of Washington since the beginning of 2022, and

WHEREAS, federal law prohibits marijuana related businesses from accessing traditional banking services, forcing these businesses to operate on a cash-only basis and making them a target for criminals, and

WHEREAS, while King County has traditionally allocated its portion of marijuana excise tax revenue collected by the state in accordance with RCW 69.54.540 to law enforcement activities by the King County sheriff's office, in 2020, the executive proposed, and the council approved, redirecting marijuana excise tax revenues away from the sheriff's office and toward community-based programs within the department of local services and the department of community and human services, and

WHEREAS, criminal activity targeting marijuana retailers impacts the broader community, and

WHEREAS, a coordinated marijuana-retail-security effort is required to prevent crimes against marijuana retailers and to ensure the safety and security of communities across King County;

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

A. The council requests the King County executive address the recent increase in criminal activity targeting marijuana retailers across King County by establishing a marijuana retail security task force to develop strategies to prevent that criminal activity and to prepare a report.

B. The task force should consist of representatives, including, but not limited to:

1. The King County prosecuting attorney's office;
2. The King County sheriff's office;
3. Marijuana retail shop owners; and
4. Impacted neighborhood groups and community organizations.

C. The task force should consider strategies including, but not limited to:

1. Identifying and providing the resources necessary to aid law enforcement in the prevention of criminal activity targeting marijuana retailers, including the use of marijuana excise tax revenues to prevent and mitigate community impacts of marijuana retail related crimes;
2. Deepening interjurisdictional cooperation and data sharing to identify trends in criminal activity targeting marijuana retailers; and
3. Coordinating emphasis patrols by law enforcement officers in the vicinity of marijuana retail locations across King County.

D. The report should include, but not be limited to:

1. A listing and description of marijuana retail security and crime prevention strategies and techniques that will be developed and implemented to reduce criminal activity targeting marijuana retailers across King County and an estimated timeline for their implementation; and
2. An analysis of the need for additional staff and resources across King County government departments and agencies to develop and implement marijuana retail security and crime prevention efforts as well as a fiscal note summarizing the budget need to support these efforts.

E. The King County executive should electronically file the report not later than August 31, 2022, with

the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original and provide
an electronic copy to all councilmembers and the lead staff of the law and justice committee, or its successor.