



## Legislation Text

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Clerk 04/12/2022

A MOTION requesting the King County executive convene a public safety summit to develop and implement strategies to reduce criminal activity and enhance public safety in King County and provide a report.

WHEREAS, King County has seen a drastic increase in crime, and violent crime in particular, over the last year, and

WHEREAS, in 2021, according to data from the King County prosecutor, the total number of shots fired was up around fifty-four percent, the number of overall shooting victims was up seventy percent and the number of shooting fatalities was up fifty-four percent over the four-year average from 2017 through 2020, and

WHEREAS, the four hundred and sixty shooting victims reported in 2021 were disproportionately people of color at eighty-one percent and forty-eight percent of fatal and non-fatal victims identified as Black, and

WHEREAS, significant staff shortages at the King County sheriff's office, with over one hundred commissioned officer vacancies, has left sheriff's deputies feeling stretched, criminals emboldened and communities vulnerable, and

WHEREAS, jail booking restrictions at King County detention facilities, while initially intended to lower the total number of inmates and stymie the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, have hindered efforts by law enforcement officials to keep even known chronic offenders off the streets and prevent further harm to local communities, and

WHEREAS, the combination of COVID-19 restrictions and lack of sufficient funding has culminated in

a severe backlog of pending felony cases at the King County superior court; with 4,820 pending felonies in February 2022 up from an average of 3,211 in February 2019, and

WHEREAS, crime and criminal activity has reached crisis levels and are impacting communities in every corner of King County, and

WHEREAS, coordinated efforts across county agencies and between partner jurisdictions are required to reduce crime levels and ensure the safety and security of all King County residents;

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 and provide for basic public safety needs across King County by convening a public safety and criminal justice summit to develop and implement strategies to reduce crime and enhance public safety and prepare a report.

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

1. The King County prosecuting attorney's office;
2. The King County superior court;
3. The King County sheriff's office;
4. The King County department of adult and juvenile detention;
5. Local jurisdictions contracting with the King County sheriff's office for law enforcement services;
6. The Federal Bureau of Investigations Uniform Crime Reporting Program;
7. Sound Cities Association;
8. The city of Seattle; and
9. Impacted neighborhood groups and community organizations.

C. The public safety summit should evaluate programs and strategies to reduce crime and enhance public safety including, but not limited to:

1. Identifying and providing the resources necessary to aid the King County sheriff's office and local jurisdictions in the recruitment and retention of police officers, particularly patrol officers

2. Establishing a minimum commissioned officer to population ratio for unincorporated King County and local jurisdictions;

3. Deepening coordination between the sheriff's office, local law enforcement agencies and federal law enforcement partners including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tabaco, Firearms and Explosives and the Federal Bureau of Investigations;

5. Emphasizing and investing in intelligence gathering and sharing between King County law enforcement agencies and local jurisdictions, particularly as it relates to identifying and targeting known chronic offenders, the small number of individuals responsible for a large share of criminal activity;

6. Identifying and providing the resources necessary to aid the King County prosecuting attorney's office in reducing the backlog of pending felony cases;

7. Designing implementation of the strategies developed by the Region's High Barrier Individual Working Group to address issues relating to individuals cycling through the criminal justice system;

8. Removing jail booking restrictions on county detention facilities; and

9. Enhancing public safety and community outreach resources through the development and support of neighborhood watch programs.

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

1. A listing and description of public safety enhancing strategies and techniques that will be developed and implemented to reduce crime levels in 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 crime prevention and public safety enhancing 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.