



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

September 24, 2007

Motion 12579

Proposed No. 2007-0453.2

Sponsors Constantine, Patterson, Lambert,
Hague, Phillips and Ferguson

1 A MOTION to establish a gang suppression unit within the
2 King County sheriff's office for purposes of reducing gang-
3 related crime and ensuring community safety.

4
5 WHEREAS, under the state Constitution, state law and county ordinance, the
6 King County sheriff's office is responsible for certain mandated regional and local law
7 enforcement services. Foremost among these responsibilities is that the sheriff's office is
8 the first response "police department" for all of King County's unincorporated areas and
9 for twelve cities through contracts. As a consequence, the sheriff provides direct law
10 enforcement services to over five hundred thirty-three thousand King County residents,
11 and

12 WHEREAS, although county crime trends overall are stable and, for some crime
13 types have decreased, the county has seen a significant increase in crime related to gang
14 activity, and

15 WHEREAS the sheriff's office reports that gang-related crime increased one
16 hundred sixty-five percent in 2006 over gang-related crime reported in 2005. In addition,
17 gang-related crime in the first quarter of 2007 has shown increases of over one hundred

18 forty percent compared to the same period last year suggesting that this type of crime is a
19 long-term and growing public safety problem, and

20 WHEREAS, gang-related crime has a significant impact on communities because
21 of the violent nature of the crimes and is also restricted to identifiable "gang members,"
22 law enforcement agencies have used specialized units to suppress and eliminate gang
23 activities within communities. The use of gang suppression units is considered a best
24 practice with known positive results. The Seattle police department currently has a
25 permanent gang unit, and

26 WHEREAS the sheriff's office has had a permanent gang unit, but budget issues
27 forced the elimination of the unit several years ago, and

28 WHEREAS, the sheriff's office recognizes the need to address the gang crime
29 problem within the county, the sheriff has reorganized existing resources to establish a
30 gang suppression unit that works with other police agencies and the state department of
31 corrections. Nevertheless, the resources used in the unit have been loaned from other
32 units and other vital sheriff responsibilities are not being addressed;

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

34 It is the intent of the council that the sheriff's office have a gang suppression unit
35 to ensure public safety so long as that funding does not jeopardize critical prevention,

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36 intervention and reentry assistance programs aimed at reducing gang involvement and
37 criminal activity in King County.

38

Motion 12579 was introduced on 9/4/2007 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 9/24/2007, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Mr. Gossett, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Phillips, Ms. Hague and Mr. Constantine

No: 0

Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments None