

WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS & POLICE CHIEFS

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Serving the Law Enforcement Community and the Citizens of Washington



October 19, 2018

Greetings from Your Executive Director:

As we move into the last stretch before the election (ballots were mailed today I think) here is **some usable information on both I-1639 and I-940**. As I mentioned in a recent report, the State Sheriffs Association (WSSA) passed resolutions opposing both initiatives, and although WASPC (because of our legal status) cannot campaign, we can explain our board's opposition to the language of I-940 as written, and support for the "final draft".

Let's start with I-1639, the gun initiative- attached is a [summary of initiative completed by our Policy Director](#), James McMahan. If it passes, it will increase workload for our agencies, as it would require the same background process currently required for pistols to also apply to the new definition of "semiautomatic assault rifles". 1639 also specifies that local agencies work with the State Patrol and Dept. of Licensing to verify ongoing eligibility each year. If someone is found not in compliance, the chief law enforcement officer of that jurisdiction is notified and you are required to "take steps" to ensure that persons are not illegally in possession.

On to I-940-- I am providing a number of links to **newspaper articles and editorials both for and against the initiative**, so you get some idea of what is being communicated and the messages voters are getting. Remember that our main focus is ensuring that legislators pass the "final draft", House Bill 3003, when they get back in January. The (very) good news so far is that even the newspapers that are recommending a "yes" vote for 940 are saying clearly that they want the legislature to then pass the agreed-upon version we worked on last year. The newspapers that are publishing articles urging a "no" vote are highlighting our concerns with the complicated deadly force standard and the unintended consequences of the first aid requirement. Everybody, however, is specifically calling for the legislature to vote HB 3003 back into law.

Here are some links to newspapers who have **endorsed I-940** —again, note that most specifically refer to the next steps for the legislature:

Tacoma News Tribune:

<https://www.thenewstribune.com/opinion/editorials/article220193150.html>

The Olympian:

<https://www.theolympian.com/opinion/editorials/article219961935.html>

The Seattle Times:

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/editorials/the-times-recommends-yes-on-i-940-to-change-law-on-police-use-of-deadly-force/>

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Here are some papers around the state who have **come out against I-940**. Again, they also refer to the need for the legislature to pass the agreed upon language:

The Everett Herald:

<https://www.heraldnet.com/opinion/editorial-send-i-940-back-to-legislature-for-better-bill/>

Spokane Spokesman-Review:

<http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2018/oct/17/vote-no-on-the-gun-initiatives/>

The Columbian:

<https://www.columbian.com/news/2018/oct/02/in-our-view-vote-no-on-initiative-940/>

Walla Walla Union Bulletin:

http://www.union-bulletin.com/opinion/editorials/initiative-is-flawed-and-should-be-rejected/article_f471028e-d22e-11e8-95a1-cf9a60e4a7d9.html

Whidbey Times:

<https://www.whidbeynewstimes.com/opinion/editorial-reject-i-940-lawmakers-should-pass-compromise-instead/>

Here is an article from the Spokesman-Review that is a good overview of law enforcement's concerns with I-940, and both Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich and Chief Craig Meidl provide great insight:

<http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2018/oct/17/spokane-top-law-officers-back-reform-of-states-dea/>

The Seattle Times published two opposing views on I-940, the first from Ted Buck, a prominent and respected attorney who represents officers and deputies in inquests:

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/con-police-officers-at-risk-if-initiative-940-passes/>

The Times also published this letter supporting I-940 from retired King County Deputy Carlos Bratcher:

<https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/pro-i-940-supports-police-and-helps-build-trust-with-communities/>

I offer these links just to provide some overview for you on what is being sent out- as always, let me know if you have any questions!

You know that one of our key legislative goals has been **substantive improvements in the mental health system**- especially in regards to serious and chronic mental illness and issues related to the state hospitals. In other words, the state needs to step up and make sure there are

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places to take those who need follow up and treatment and to help get them out of our jails and off the streets where sometimes bad interactions are occurring. The Governor's office has been communicating with us about the fact that they are exploring significant improvements in the state system, including changes at the state hospitals. Two things: first of all, we will provide more information during the legislative update at the Chelan conference, and we will follow that up with a webinar available to all our members, which will include the Governor's staff, to explain the contemplated changes and answer questions. Second, just a reminder that there are two webinars also coming up in the next several weeks in regard to Ricky's law and changes to Involuntary Admissions and those links are found in the GTWO or [here](#).

Finally, here is a story on the retirement of Island County Sheriff Mark Brown. I know I speak for many of us in Washington State when I say that one of the best parts of being a law enforcement officer here is the great people we get to know- and Sheriff Brown is one of the best!

<https://www.whidbeynewstimes.com/news/sheriff-brown-will-walk-off-into-sunset/>

Have a great weekend-

Work Hard- Have Fun- Stay Safe

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