



COMPAS
COUNCIL OF METROPOLITAN POLICE AND SHERIFFS



December 6, 2017

TO: All Media Outlets

FM: President Mike Solan
Council of Metropolitan Police and Sheriffs

President Marco Monteblanco
Washington State Fraternal Order of Police

Vice President Rich O'Neill
Seattle Police Officers Guild

President Craig Bulkley
Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs

RE: De-escalate WA Initiative 940

The Council of Metropolitan Police and Sheriffs, the Washington State Fraternal Order of Police, the Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs and the Seattle Police Officers Guild oppose I-940. This initiative seeks to hide its true purpose in language that mandates training that officers in Washington State already receive. Its true purpose, as shared through the social media accounts and statements of its promoters, is to make it easier to prosecute police officers.

De-Escalate Washington and their paid signature gatherers claim that this initiative is supported, funded and promoted by law enforcement. They cite a few elected and former Sheriffs and Chiefs and name a handful of retired officers and current Department of Corrections employees. This is misleading at best and downright deceitful at worst. The organizations that actually represent the men and men in law enforcement adamantly oppose the initiative.

"The Council of Metropolitan Police and Sheriffs (COMPAS) represents the largest police unions in Washington State and we do not support this initiative," said COMPAS President and SPD Officer Mike Solan. "It is downright dishonest for the initiative's promoters to claim I-940 is good for law enforcement and that our members support it. We encourage everyone to read the actual language of the initiative and see for themselves that the true purpose is to put police officers in jail."

Members of the Fraternal Order of Police agree. "Our members do not support I-940, either," said Marco Montoblanco, President of the Washington State Chapter of the FOP. "We have made every effort to meet with the activists and promoters of this initiative to find a resolution to their concerns yet their main and only focus is to make it easier to prosecute officers."

Current Washington State law already requires officers to receive de-escalation and mental health training. The initiative also mandates that officers put greater emphasis on providing medical care to individuals instead of actually doing their job of protecting the community from crime. While the anti-police activists continue to claim that the current law provides "de facto" immunity from prosecution for police officers and that officers have more rights than regular citizens, legislative commentary on the deadly force statute in RCW 9A.16.040 contradicts this assertion:

"The legislature recognizes that RCW 9A.16.040 establishes a dual standard with respect to the use of deadly force by peace officers and private citizens, and further recognizes that private citizens' permissible use of deadly force under the authority of RCW 9A.01.200, 9A.16.020, or 9A.16.050 is not restricted and remains broader than the limitations imposed on peace officers."

It is clear that current Washington law already allows more protections for citizens and fewer protections for officers. Once again, promoters of I-940 are being dishonest in their characterization of the current law.

COMPAS, FOP, WACOPS and SPOG emphatically oppose this initiative as it does not make communities safer. It does not provide any funding to deal with the true problems that our communities face: rampant opioid addiction, a growing homeless population, and a chronically underfunded mental health system. Our organizations support the development of the highest trained, most professional law enforcement officers possible. We support data collection to determine if the use of force is being used inappropriately and we support increased funding in our communities to deal with chronic drug and homelessness problems. This initiative addresses none of these issues and instead focuses on lowering the standard to prosecute officers.

The Council of Metropolitan Police and Sheriffs represents over 2,000 currently commissioned officers in Seattle and King County. The Washington State Fraternal Order of Police represents 2500 members consisting of law enforcement personnel from city, county and federal agencies. The Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs represents over 4300 individual officers and 110 different police guilds and associations. The Seattle Police Officers Guild is the largest police union in the Pacific Northwest representing over 1300 officers and sergeants.

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