



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 446

January Session, 2025

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1489

Senate, April 2, 2025

The Committee on Public Safety and Security reported through SEN. GASTON of the 23rd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL POLICE FORCES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) (a) As used in this section and
2 section 2 of this act:

3 (1) "Member municipality" means a town, city or borough that joins
4 a regional police force; and

5 (2) "Regional police force" means a police department formed by two
6 or more member municipalities that enter into an agreement to combine
7 such member municipalities' police departments.

8 (b) On and after October 1, 2025, a regional police force may be
9 formed by two or more municipalities that each have a population of
10 not more than fifty thousand, as determined by the most recent
11 decennial census. Municipalities seeking to form a regional police force
12 shall submit an application to the Commissioner of Emergency Services
13 and Public Protection, in a form and manner prescribed by the

14 commissioner. The application shall include, but need not be limited to,
15 (1) a description of the proposed structure and governance of the
16 regional police force, (2) a financial plan detailing the estimated costs
17 and projected savings resulting from the formation of the regional police
18 force, and (3) a plan for ensuring continued public safety during the
19 period of transition to a regional police force. The commissioner may
20 approve the application if the commissioner determines that the
21 regional police force would be sufficiently funded, managed and
22 effective and that the formation of such regional police force would
23 satisfy the requirements established by the provisions of this section.

24 (c) (1) Each regional police force shall establish a regional police
25 authority to oversee policy decisions, approve budgets, establish
26 operational priorities, manage police operations, allocate resources and
27 ensure that public safety standards are met. The regional police
28 authority shall consist of representatives from each member
29 municipality.

30 (2) Each regional police authority shall annually hold a public hearing
31 to review such regional police force's performance and consider
32 comments from residents of the member municipalities.

33 (3) Member municipalities that form a regional police force shall
34 jointly assume liability for actions taken by such regional police force.
35 Such member municipalities shall share the cost of liability insurance
36 proportionally on the basis of population.

37 (d) Each regional police authority shall annually submit a report to
38 the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection and the
39 chief elected official, chief executive officer and legislative body of each
40 of the member municipalities. Each such report shall include, but need
41 not be limited to, information regarding (1) the regional police force's
42 budget allocations and expenditures, (2) crime statistics and community
43 policing efforts in the member municipalities, and (3) the regional police
44 force's performance metrics, including, but not limited to, response
45 times, community outreach and officer staffing.

46 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2025*) For the fiscal year ending June 30,
47 2026, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Commissioner of Emergency
48 Services and Public Protection shall administer a regional police force
49 incentive grant program to provide grants to member municipalities for
50 the costs associated with (1) establishing a regional police force, (2)
51 transitioning to a regional police force, (3) the ongoing operations of a
52 regional police force, (4) the construction of facilities, (5) law
53 enforcement equipment, and (6) crime prevention initiatives. The
54 commissioner shall develop (A) guidelines for the administration of
55 such grant program, and (B) eligibility criteria for participation and the
56 expenditure of grant funds. Member municipalities may apply on such
57 form and in such manner as prescribed by the commissioner. The
58 commissioner shall prioritize grant awards to member municipalities
59 with populations of less than thirty thousand, as determined by the
60 most recent decennial census.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2025</i>	New section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 2, "develop guidelines for the administration of such grant program, eligibility criteria for participation and expenditure" was changed to "develop (A) guidelines for the administration of such grant program, and (B) eligibility criteria for participation and the expenditure" for clarity.

PS *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection	GF - Potential Cost	Potential Significant	Potential Significant
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection	GF - Potential Cost	Up to 330,000	Up to 330,000
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Potential Cost	Up to 147,000	Up to 147,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: See Below

Explanation

The bill allows certain municipalities to form regional police forces, resulting in the following fiscal impacts.

Section 1 may result in a cost to municipalities with a population of 50,000 or less beginning in FY 26 that choose to form a regional police authority, to the extent that resources are used to establish the authority and apply to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP).²

If DESPP receives enough applications to form regional police forces, they may need to hire one Associate Accountant and one State Police Lieutenant to review and make recommendations on such applications.

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 40.71% of payroll in FY 26.

² According to the Department of Public Health, in 2023 there were 150 municipalities with a population of 50,000 or less.

This results in a potential cost of \$240,000 in FY 26 and FY 27 to DESPP and \$110,364 to the State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits.³

Section 2, which requires DESPP to administer a grant program for various costs associated with establishing a regional police force, results in a potential significant cost to DESPP and a potential revenue gain to eligible municipalities beginning in FY 26 to the extent that DESPP allocates funding for this purpose.

It is estimated that grants for the costs associated with the transition to and ongoing operations of a regional police force, the construction of its facilities, and law enforcement equipment will cost tens of millions of dollars per regional police force. If DESPP receives enough grant applications, the agency may need to hire one Grants and Contracts Specialist. This results in a potential cost of \$90,000 in FY 26 and FY 27 to DESPP and \$36,639 to the State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits.

Municipalities with a population of 30,000 or less are prioritized for grant funding and are more likely to see a revenue gain.⁴

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of regional police forces formed and inflation.

³ The estimated salary of these positions is \$90,000 and 150,000 with fringe benefits rates of \$36,639 and \$73,725, respectively

⁴ According to the Department of Public Health, in 2023 there were 137 municipalities with a population of 30,000 or less.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 1489*****AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL POLICE FORCES.*****SUMMARY**

This bill allows a regional police force to be formed on or after October 1, 2025, by two or more municipalities that each have a population of 50,000 or less. Interested municipalities must submit an application to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) commissioner for approval.

Each regional police force must establish a regional police authority to oversee certain items (e.g., approving budgets and setting operational priorities). The authority must also (1) include representatives from each member municipality and (2) annually report to DESPP and the chief elected officials of each member municipality on certain specified information (e.g., police performance metrics).

Finally, the bill requires DESPP to administer a regional police force incentive grant program to give grants to member municipalities for certain costs, including establishing and transitioning to a regional police force.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

REGIONAL POLICE FORCE***Application Process***

Under the bill, municipalities that want to form a force must submit an application to the DESPP commissioner, in the way he prescribes. The application must include:

1. a description of the regional police force's proposed structure and governance,

2. a financial plan detailing the estimated costs and projected savings from forming the regional police force, and
3. a plan for ensuring continued public safety during the transition period to a regional police force.

The DESPP commissioner may approve the application if he determines the regional police force would be sufficiently funded, managed, and effective and the formation would satisfy the bill's requirements.

Regional Police Authority

The bill requires each regional police force to establish a regional police authority to oversee policy decisions, approve budgets, set operational priorities, manage police operations, allocate resources, and ensure that public safety standards are met. The authority must (1) consist of representatives from each member municipality and (2) annually hold a public hearing to review the police force's performance and consider resident comments.

The bill requires member municipalities that form a regional police force to assume liability for the actions it takes. These municipalities must share the cost of liability insurance proportionally based on population.

The regional police authority must annually submit a report to the DESPP commissioner and the chief elected official, chief executive officer, and legislative body of each member municipality. The report must include information on:

1. the regional police force's budget allocations and expenditures;
2. crime statistics and community policing efforts in the member municipalities; and
3. the regional police force's performance metrics, including response times, community outreach, and officer staffing.

REGIONAL POLICE FORCE INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM

For FY 26 and annually after that, the bill requires DESPP to administer a regional police force incentive grant program that gives grants to member municipalities for the costs associated with:

1. establishing and transitioning to a regional police force,
2. operating a regional police force,
3. constructing facilities,
4. law enforcement equipment, and
5. crime prevention initiatives.

Under the bill, member municipalities may apply for these grants on a commissioner-prescribed form and in the way he determines. The commissioner must develop (1) guidelines for administering the grant program and (2) eligibility criteria for participation and the expenditure of grant funds. He must prioritize grant awards to member municipalities with populations of less than 30,000, as determined by the most recent decennial census.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 29 Nay 0 (03/18/2025)