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## **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)