
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5264

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senate Health Care (originally sponsored by Senators Bailey, Parlette, Warnick, Keiser, Jayapal, and Braun)

READ FIRST TIME 02/10/15.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a silver alert system; and adding a
2 new chapter to Title 70 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that Washington
5 state's elderly population is growing and the number of individuals
6 with dementia is increasing. The legislature further finds that
7 approximately sixty percent of individuals with dementia will wander
8 at least once and that if not found within twenty-four hours, up to
9 half of wandering seniors with dementia will suffer serious injury or
10 death. The legislature further finds that the state of Washington has
11 a compelling interest in protecting the safety of vulnerable citizens
12 with cognitive impairments, regardless of age.

13 (2) The legislature intends to create a public notification
14 system to broadcast information about missing persons with
15 Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or other mental disabilities to aid in
16 their safe return. Because there are many individuals who have been
17 diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease before they have reached age
18 sixty-five, this system must also address those people under the age
19 of sixty-five with cognitive impairments.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
2 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
3 otherwise.

4 (1) "Law enforcement agency" means the law enforcement agency
5 that has primary jurisdiction for locating the missing senior
6 citizen.

7 (2) "Silver alert" means a quick response system designed to
8 issue and coordinate alerts following the disappearance of a person
9 who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or other
10 mental disability.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A law enforcement agency may request a
12 silver alert for a person when the following conditions apply:

13 (1) The person suffers from a mental impairment verified by
14 written documentation;

15 (2) The request is made within seventy-two hours of the person's
16 disappearance;

17 (3) The disappearance poses a credible threat to the person's
18 health and safety;

19 (4) There is sufficient information to provide the public to
20 assist in locating the person; and

21 (5) A law enforcement investigation has ruled out alternative
22 explanations for the disappearance.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Within existing resources, the Washington
24 state patrol shall develop and implement a plan, commonly known as a
25 "silver alert plan" for voluntary cooperation between local, state,
26 tribal, and other law enforcement agencies, state government
27 agencies, radio and television stations, and cable and satellite
28 systems to enhance the public's ability to assist in recovering
29 people who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or
30 other mental disability.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** Sections 1 through 4 of this act
32 constitute a new chapter in Title 70 RCW.

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