



SB 387: A Legislative Framework for Educating the Next Generation of Peace Officers

As California's elected leaders continue the dialogue about how we can work together to improve the law enforcement profession, to truly improve public safety outcomes and restore trust in law enforcement, we must provide officers with the education they need to prepare them for the challenges of modern day policing.

We don't just want to improve our profession; we want to have the best trained and most highly educated peace officers in the country by the end of this decade.

THE PROBLEM

We Need A Higher Education Requirement

Community policing today is more complex than ever before. The basic functions and duties of an officer have changed immensely over the years, but the level of education we expect of our officers has changed very little. It has also become clear that the 685-hour police academy does not cover the mandated training required by the Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission (POST) and all the new legislative requirements.

Years of research and academic studies repeatedly confirm a clear connection between education levels and police behavior. These studies show that a higher education significantly reduces the likelihood that officers will use force as their first option to gain compliance and educated officers tend to demonstrate greater levels of creativity and problem-solving skills

THE SOLUTION

More Time in the Classroom

Providing both prospective and current officers with more opportunities to earn a college degree and the curriculum needed to prepare them for the rigors and adversities they will face on the job will help us to achieve a cultural shift that will prepare and empower our officers to approach each interaction with the necessary tools and skills, especially when confronting resistance.

- Develop an expanded curriculum specifically designed to prepare officers to meet the expectations of a modern police force, including classes on mental health, social services, psychology, communication and more – a requirement for officers looking to move up in the ranks and to receive their intermediate and advanced POST certificates.
- Create a modernized degree specific to policing for law enforcement that includes a multi-discipline approach to capture all the various skill-set requirements necessary of the modern police officer.