



# Pierce County

## Office of the County Executive

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**BRUCE F. DAMMEIER**

Executive

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February 9, 2022

Honorable Members of the Pierce County Council:

Property and violent crime are increasing in nearly every neighborhood of our County. At the same time, men and women serving in law enforcement are turning in their badges.

To promote safe and just communities in Pierce County, I propose:

1. Councilmembers sign on to the enclosed letter advocating for state legislation that restores the ability for police to pursue suspects and use reasonable force; and
2. Council fund a \$10,000 retention incentive for Pierce County Sheriff's law enforcement deputies.

### Advocate for Corrective Legislation

We have all heard the stories about police who are forced to stand by as criminals flee or someone suffers a mental health crisis. Well-intentioned but ill-conceived changes to state law have prevented police from protecting the public in many circumstances. It is not coincidental that homicides, property crimes, assault, and traffic fatalities have dramatically increased over the last year. It is dangerous and demoralizing for everyone involved. Several bills currently under consideration correct many of the errors made when the Legislature adopted House Bill 1310 last year, while maintaining important safeguards surrounding reasonable uses of force. I urge you to join me, as well our Prosecutor and Sheriff, to advocate for those bills that restore law enforcement's ability to protect the public.

Attached is a letter I will be sending to Pierce County legislators. **Please let my office know by 4:30 p.m. on Friday, February 11 if you would like to add your signature to the letter.** The house of origin cutoff is on Tuesday, February 15, so we need to act quickly.

### Fund Retention Incentives for Deputies

Every day, the men and women of the Sheriff's Department risk their lives and their wellbeing to protect and serve our residents. The challenges of serving in law enforcement have never been greater and many are considering retirement, transferring to jurisdictions with higher pay, or choosing different careers with less danger and stress. To remain an employer of choice—and subject to fulfilling collective bargaining obligations with our labor partners—the Sheriff and I urge the Council to approve funding for a \$10,000 retention incentive for every

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commissioned law enforcement deputy in the Pierce County Sheriff's Department. This \$4 million appropriation will help us keep the deputies we currently have on the force, as well as attract new applicants to fill vacancies. A draft supplemental budget ordinance is attached.

Thank you for your prompt consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Dammeier", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bruce F. Dammeier  
Pierce County Executive

Encl: Letter to Pierce County Delegation  
Draft Supplemental Budget Ordinance