

Community Responder Programs

WHEREAS, police departments tend to be stretched beyond their resources to provide adequate public safety services,

WHEREAS, recently many police officers have retired or are quitting for other reasons,

WHEREAS, many police departments have significant difficulty recruiting new officers,

WHEREAS, police spend over 40% of their response time responding to noncriminal calls ([2020 New York Times analysis](#)), such as mental health crises, wellness checks, illness, or encounters with someone who is homeless, or impaired by drugs or alcohol,

WHEREAS, non-uniformed community response teams (CRTs) with members trained to deal with mental health crises are fully capable of responding to noncriminal situations,

WHEREAS, 911 operators in cities with successful CRT programs are trained to discriminate between noncriminal calls where CRT skills are needed and ones requiring a police response,

WHEREAS, CRTs are safer and more effective in dealing with people in a mental health crisis when there is no threat of violence than police teams are,

WHEREAS, CRTs are trained and attuned to de-escalate non-violent situations, such as mental health crises, and drug or alcohol intoxication incidents,

WHEREAS, CRTs are able to provide an entry point to developing long-term solutions for someone in a mental health crisis, or with other behavioral issues,

WHEREAS, responding to mental health crises with specialists trained to respond appropriately, [reflects national best standards](#),

WHEREAS, established CRTs have [extremely rarely](#) found themselves in danger or needing to request police support,

WHEREAS, when CRTs respond, police units are relieved of calls for which their professional skills are not required, freeing up police time and attention to address criminal activity and other matters for which they are trained and needed,

WHEREAS, police are less likely to be faced with situations where their mere presence or a response appropriate for a violent situation instead escalates the tension needlessly and risks an unnecessary tragedy; tragic for police involved as well as for community members,

WHEREAS, it may be easier to recruit members of a CRT than police,

45th District Democrats Resolution

Page 2 of 2

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WHEREAS, the Council of State Governments has available a toolkit for tailoring programs to meet community needs: [Expanding First Response: A Toolkit for Community Responder Programs](#).

WHEREAS, a number of existing successful CRT programs can serve as models and can be learned from including those in Olympia, WA ([Crisis Response Unit](#)), Eugene & Springfield, OR ([CAHOOTS](#)), St. Petersburg, FL ([CALL](#)); Rochester, NY ([PIC](#)); Denver, CO ([STAR](#), and [expansion announcement](#)); New York, NY ([B-HEARD](#)); San Francisco, CA ([SCRT](#)); Portland, OR ([PSR](#)); Albuquerque, NM ([ACS](#)); Toronto, ON ([CCSS](#)),

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the 45th District Democrats support efforts to develop and support CRTs by every level of governmental in which anyone residing in the 45th Legislative District is a constituent, [including adequate financial support](#),

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the 45th District Democrats urge our elected government officials to support CRTs by implementing or sustaining CRT programs in their jurisdictions, by providing financial support, training programs or other supportive resources, and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the chair of the 45th District Democrats shall convey a copy of this resolution to

- Governor Jay Inslee
- State Senator Manka Dhingra, State Representatives Roger Goodman and Larry Springer
- King County Executive Dow Constantine
- King County Council Members Claudia Balducci and Sarah Perry
- Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell
- US Representatives Dr. Kim Schrier and Susan Del Bene
- The Mayors*, City Council Members*, Chiefs of Police*, and City Managers* or Clerk*s of
 - Redmond
 - Kirkland
 - Woodinville
 - Sammamish
 - and Duvall
- The Chair of the Washington State Democrats, Tina Podlowski
- The Chair of the King County Democrats, Shasti Conrad
- The Chairs of the 1st, the 41st, and the 48th Legislative District Democrats* – the legislative district Democratic organization with constituents in these cities
- Local news outlets

* Additional specific names and contact information will be provided to the Chair of the 45th District Democrats for this purpose.