

Councilmember Vincent B. Orange, Sr.

A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Councilmember Orange introduced the following bill, which was referred to the Committee _____.

To establish, within the Metropolitan Police Department, the Division of Special Community Operations, whose purpose would be to patrol the District’s communities, including business corridors, neighborhoods, school areas, and any public event that attracts more than 50 individuals, to provide staffing requirements for the Division of Special Community Operations, and to require the Metropolitan Police Department to conduct a study to determine the most appropriate assignment of officers in the defined areas.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this Act may be cited as the “Metropolitan Police Department Division of Special Community Operations Establishment Act of 2005”.

Sec. 2. Findings.

The Council of the District of Columbia finds that:

(1) According to the results of numerous city-wide summits and forums, crime and safety are of top priority to residents of the District.

(2) Summit participants expressed the belief that more police patrols and increased police visibility would be a premier solution to crime problems in the District.

(3) According to national qualitative and quantitative reports, police presence deters crime.

(4) A significant percentage of District residents support more police officers being assigned to their neighborhoods, business corridors, school areas, and other areas of their communities.

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(5) Many District residents do not feel safe in their communities.

(6) It is the responsibility of the District government, through its designee, the Metropolitan Police Department, in partnership with the communities it serves, to ensure that crime is reduced to the minimum level feasible.

(7) According to the Metropolitan Police Department’s “Report on Homicide in the District of Columbia”, 40% of homicides between 2001 and 2004 were committed by individuals 18-24 years of age.

(8) According to the “Report on Homicide in the District of Columbia”, Wards 5, 7, and 8 combined account for 71% of homicides between 2001 and 2004.

(9) The Metropolitan Police Department must continue to develop plans of action that would result in more police presence in the District’s communities.

(10) Increased police visibility is an integral component of community policing.

(11) It has been proven in several urban areas, including, Boston, Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia that community policing has reduced crime rates.

(12) Crime has been proven to be a major deteriorating factor of communities.

(13) Community policing is a philosophical approach to the entire business of public safety. It involves reforming decision-making processes, and creating new cultures within police departments, rather than being a specific tactical plan. It is an organization strategy that redefines the goals of policing.

Sec. 2. Establishment of the Special Community Operations Division.

The Metropolitan Police Department (“MPD”) shall establish a Special Community Operations Division (“SCO”) that, shall work under the Special Operations Commander. The exclusive responsibility of the SCO shall be to patrol:

- (a) The District’s communities including business corridors, neighborhoods, and school areas; and
- (b) Any public event that attracts more than 50 individuals.

Sec. 3. Staffing.

(1) The MPD shall hire an additional 400 officers, which will result in the District of Columbia having an authorized police force of 4,200 for fiscal year 2007. The newly hired officers shall be assigned to the SCO.

1 (2) The SCO officers shall be assigned exclusively to community patrols within
2 each ward. Eighty percent of the SCO officers within each ward shall be assigned to foot
3 and bike patrols.

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5 (3) Officers assigned to the SCO shall not be reassigned to other
6 divisions within MPD, except in a national or District emergency. If an SCO officer is
7 reassigned, the MPD shall transfer an officer from another division to the SCO during the
8 emergency period.

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10 Sec. 4. Required studies.

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12 (1) The MPD shall develop a plan to protect the public entertainment complexes,
13 identified by the Department, as requiring police presence. The plan shall take into
14 account the authorized occupancy capacity of these venues

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16 (2) The MPD shall conduct a study to determine the most appropriate
17 Assignment of officers in the defined areas.

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20 Sec. 5. Fiscal impact statement.

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22 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the
23 fiscal impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia Home
24 Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D. C. Code 1-233(c)(3)).

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26 Sec. 6. Effective date.

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28 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of
29 Veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of
30 Congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia
31 Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code
32 §1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.
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