

Washington State Judicial Branch

2023-25 Biennial Budget

Fund WA Auto Theft Prevention Account

Agency: Administrative Office of the Courts

Decision Package Code/Title: 5M – Fund WA Auto Theft Prev. Account

Agency Recommendation Summary Text:

The Administrative Office of the Courts requests \$2.4 million per year as a deposit from the General Fund-State to the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Account to support ongoing programs. (General Fund-State)

Fiscal Summary:

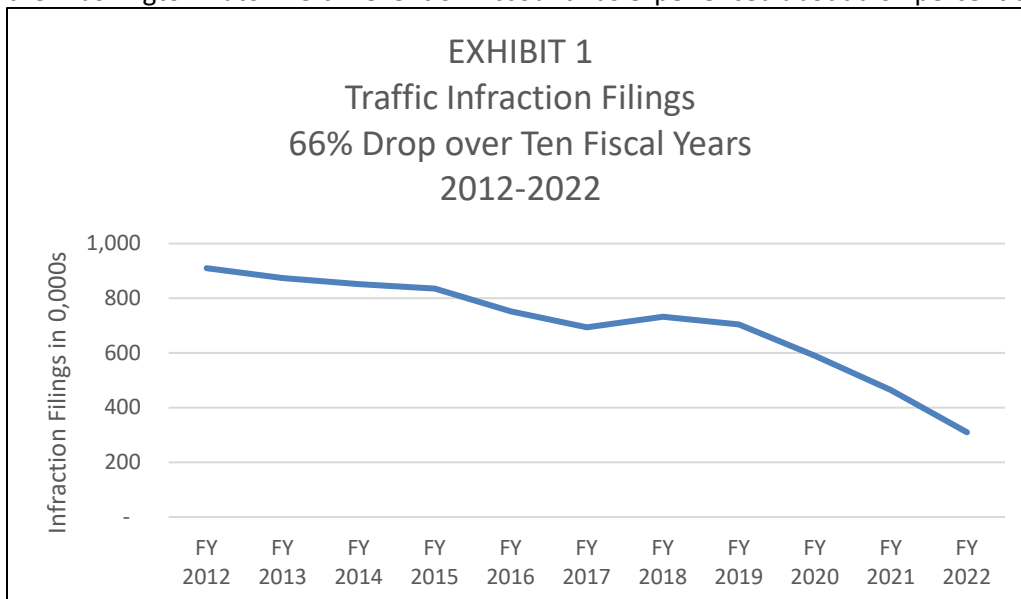
	FY 2024	FY 2025	Biennial	FY 2026	FY 2027	Biennial
Staffing						
FTEs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Operating Expenditures						
Fund 001-1	\$2,400,000	\$2,400,000	\$4,800,000	\$2,400,000	\$2,400,000	\$4,800,000
Total Expenditures						
	\$2,400,000	\$2,400,000	\$4,800,000	\$2,400,000	\$2,400,000	\$4,800,000

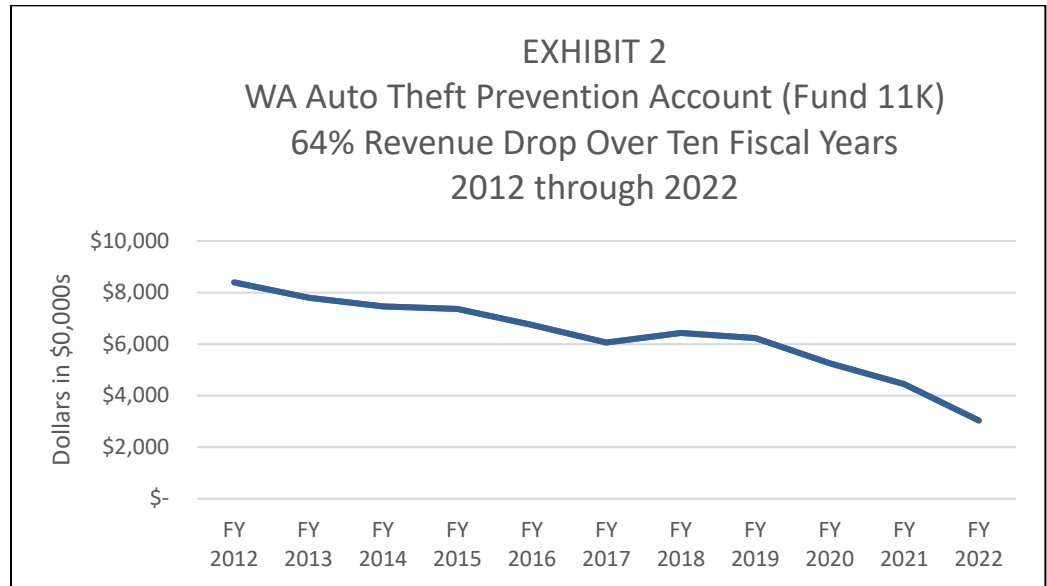
Package Description:

The Washington Auto Theft Prevention Account receives a \$10 fee on each traffic infraction. The funding may be used for activities relating to motor vehicle theft, including education, prevention, law enforcement, investigation, prosecution, and confinement.

Problem

Over the past ten years, the number of traffic infraction filings has steadily decreased, and so has the revenue generated from the \$10 fee. Between FY 2012 and FY 2022, infraction filings have decreased by about 66 percent and revenue in the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Account has experienced about a 64 percent drop. (Exhibits 1 and 2)





Solution

The Administrative Office of the Courts is the fund administrator, but does not receive appropriations from the account. In the 2021-23 biennium, the Departments of Children, Youth and Families (\$196,000) and Corrections (\$4,468,000) and the Criminal Justice Training Commission (\$10,667,000) received appropriations from the account. The Department of Corrections plans to make FY 2023 Supplemental Budget and 2023-25 Biennial Budget requests to permanently shift their Washington Auto Theft Account appropriations to General Fund-State.

This request will provide ongoing funding in the account to maintain the appropriations in the other two agencies.

Fully describe and quantify expected impacts on state residents and specific populations served:

The Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority Account was created to “support the activities of the auto theft prevention authority” and “expenditures from the account may only be used for activities relating to motor vehicle theft, including education, prevention, law enforcement, investigation, prosecution and confinement”. (RCW 46.66.080) According to the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, vehicle thefts in Washington have increased 88 percent year-to-date for 2022 compared to 2021 through the end of March.

[Press Release: Statewide Vehicle Thefts Rise Again](#)

Funding insufficiencies, and fund diversions from this purpose, reduce the ability to prevent auto theft and related offenses, and reduces law enforcement capabilities in apprehending and holding accountable those who commit auto theft offenses.

Explain what alternatives were explored by the agency and why they were rejected as solutions:

The only alternatives are to reduce the programs funded from this account or fund them directly from the General Fund-State. The Department of Corrections is pursuing direct, General Fund-State appropriations. This request is to maintain the other appropriations currently planned from the account.

What are the consequences of not funding this request?

Failure to fund this request will result in continuing declines in funding for the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority, further reducing the state’s ability to prevent and enforce auto theft and auto theft-related crimes.

Is this an expansion or alteration of a current program or service?

No

Decision Package expenditure, FTE and revenue assumptions:

Not applicable

How does the package relate to the Judicial Branch principal policy objectives?

This request ensures that the fund source administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts has sufficient funding to support appropriations made from it by the Legislature.

Are there impacts to other governmental entities?

No.

Stakeholder response:

The other agencies are supportive of AOC making this request to stabilize the funding source supporting their programs.

Are there legal or administrative mandates that require this package to be funded?

No

Does current law need to be changed to successfully implement this package?

No

Are there impacts to state facilities?

No

Are there other supporting materials that strengthen the case for this request?

None

Are there information technology impacts?

No

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