



City of Tacoma

City Council

January 16, 2024

Dear Legislators,

The Tacoma City Council would like to express our strong support for Senate Bill 6009 and a statewide prohibition on hog-tying by peace officers. Hog-tying is incredibly dangerous, inhumane, and outdated, and a statewide ban on this abhorrent practice is long overdue.

We have seen cases across the country for decades where individuals have died while restrained in a hog-tie. Hog-tying bends the body into a bow shape, resulting in the hyper expansion of the chest wall and can impair the individual's ability to breath effectively. In addition, officers restraining an individual in a hog-tie have little information about that person's health. Underlying issues such as heart conditions and substance abuse can all raise the risk of death when an individual is hog-tied.

In Tacoma, we believe that police officers have a duty to preserve life and that the continued use of hog-tying in Washington state undermines public trust in those meant to protect them. We need to find ways to ensure that our police officers are safe when they are engaging with members of our communities, but it is also our responsibility to ensure that our communities do not face unnecessary risks to their lives when they encounter the police.

A state law to consistently ban hog-tying and end the use of this dehumanizing and dangerous practice is vital, especially when safer alternatives exist. Washington state has already adopted bans on other dangerous police practices, including chokeholds and neck restraints. It is important for our community here in Tacoma that this type of state leadership on police reform continue. This legislation will also help ensure that everyone in Washington state who has died as a result of being hog-tied and the unsafe use of force will not have died in vain.

We strongly encourage you to pass Senate Bill 6009 to help protect our police officers and our communities from dangerous practices that degrade the rule of law in Washington. Many police departments already see hog-tying as creating an unnecessary and unacceptable risk to life and have banned the practice. We are proud that Tacoma is one of those cities, and we ask the state to join us.

Sincerely,

[Mayor and Council Member signatures to be added pending approval]