EXHIBIT 2
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HB 134

Crime Investigator Training

HB 134 · Frequently Asked Questions

What do CSI investigators do?

The five investigators at the Office of the Commissioner of Securities and Insurance are responsible for collecting evidence on suspected cases of securities and insurance fraud. The CSI legal bureau uses evidence collected by CSI investigators to pursue administrative and criminal action against wrongdoers. Often, the process of collecting evidence requires CSI investigators to obtain search warrants, which currently require the assistance of local law enforcement officials to execute.

What does HB 134 do?

House Bill 134 adds the CSI's investigators to the legal definition of a peace officer, gives CSI investigators access to training through the Montana Law Enforcement Academy, and allows CSI investigators to issue and execute search warrants.

Why should CSI investigators become peace officers?

CSI investigators spend much of their time out of the office collecting evidence on suspected cases of fraud. At times, the duties of CSI investigators place them in an unknown and possibly hostile environment. Training provided by the Law Enforcement Academy will ensure CSI investigators follow the appropriate procedures peace officers routinely use to be aware of their surroundings, diffuse potentially dangerous situations, and execute their duties in a safe manner.

Many fraud investigations require a search warrant to collect complete evidence. Under state law, a peace officer must be present to execute a search warrant. As a result, CSI investigators currently must rely on the assistance of local peace officers to collect evidence. Especially in small communities around Montana, this can strain local law enforcement's limited resources.

How many new peace officers would this bill create?

The Commissioner of Securities and Insurance would be responsible for deciding how many CSI investigators will be trained at the Montana Law Enforcement Academy and be designated as peace officers. Currently, the CSI employs a team of five investigators. Because CSI investigators work in teams, it would not be necessary to designate all of the CSI investigators as peace officers to properly execute search warrants and maintain the evidentiary chain of custody.

Will this bill cost money?

No. Training for CSI investigators through the Law Enforcement Academy will be sponsored with existing training funds. CSI investigators will enroll in the academy on a space-available basis.

Will this bill change the pensions CSI investigators receive?

No. CSI investigators will remain members of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS).

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