



Gambling Enforcement Agents Association



February 8, 2021

Representative Rick Hansen:

Thank you for your leadership as Chief Author of HF 401. This bill is critically important to respond to the pay parity need in law enforcement. At the October 2020 Special Session the Legislature took the extraordinary and historic measure of bypassing long standing state contract negotiations in providing a statutory market adjustment of 8.4% for State Troopers. There is no question the data shows State Troopers are making less money than their comparable peer groups, law enforcement work is more difficult and stressful than ever before, and each and every officer deserves the care and attention paid to right the current inequity in their pay and benefits.

There is however, a question of fairness and equity in that the Legislature overlooked the other almost 400 state law enforcement officers serving in the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the Department of Corrections Fugitive Apprehension Unit, the Alcohol and Gambling Division at DPS, Commerce Fraud Agents, and DNR Conservation officers. These law enforcement officers, along with the State Patrol, make up the Minnesota Law Enforcement Association (MLEA). As a group, the MLEA has collectively bargained with the State of Minnesota for almost 40 years. Never before has the legislature intervened in their contract negotiations, much less on behalf of only one group and not all similarly situated law enforcement groups. Without immediate legislative action, these remaining law enforcement groups will be left out of the opportunity to jointly bargain and achieve pay parity with other state employed law enforcement officers.

The other members of the MLEA all have similar data to that provided by the State Troopers which clearly demonstrates a market adjustment of 8.4% is appropriate for all state employed law enforcement officers. In fact, the data shows that this group (BCA, Conservation Officers, Gambling Enforcement, Commerce, and Fugitive Apprehension Agents group) is 13.8 - 17% behind most of the state and up to 20% behind the larger metro departments.

It is critically important the Legislature and Governor move swiftly to provide parity for those almost 400 state law enforcement officers left out of the October 2020 Special Session legislation who continue to show up to work every day to protect the public and our outdoor heritage.

On behalf of all law enforcement agents and officers serving in the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the Department of Corrections Fugitive Apprehension Unit, the Alcohol and Gambling Division at DPS, DNR-Enforcement, and Commerce Fraud Agents we thank you for your leadership as Chief Author of this critical legislation and hope your colleagues in the Legislature work to pass this comparable market adjustment language for the remaining MLEA members this session.

Sincerely,

Doug Henning, President, Local 3, BCA Agents Association

Joe Stattleman, President, Local 2, Conservation Officers Association

Brad Rezny, President, Local 4, Gambling Enforcement Agents Association

Steve Kritzeck, President, Local 4, Commerce Fraud Agents Association

Sarah Phenow, President, Local 4, Fugitive Apprehension Agents Association

Brian Peters, Executive Director, MPPOA