

December 10, 2020

Representative Rick Hansen:

At the October 2020 Special Session the Legislature took the extraordinary and historic measure of bypassing long standing state contract negotiations and 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 Conservation officers. These law enforcement officers, known as the Minnesota Law Enforcement Association (MLEA), have bargained together for almost forty 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.

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 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 Correction Fugitive Apprehension Unit, the Alcohol and Gambling Division at DPS, Conservation Officers, and Commerce Fraud Agents we thank you for advancing the salary adjustment issue (HRD#7SS-MJ014) at the Ways and Means Committee today. Your leadership to bring this forward is sincerely appreciated. We implore you and all members of the House of Representatives to work to include this comparable market adjustment language for the remaining MLEA members in the upcoming Special Session on Monday December 14th.

Sincerely, 

Doug Henning, BCA Agents Association, Joe Stattelman, President, Conservation Officer Association, Brad Renzy, Local 4 Representative

CC: House Committee on Ways and Means