



March 24, 2025

Representative Cedric Frazier
Minnesota House of Representatives

CC: Chair Kelly Moller, Public Safety Finance and Policy Committee

Dear Representative Frazier,

On behalf of the 87 elected Sheriffs of Minnesota, the Minnesota Sheriffs' Association (MSA) and the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (MPPOA), representing more than 10,000 rank-and-file law enforcement professionals, we respectfully express our opposition to HF 686, which seeks to prescribe how law enforcement officers conduct traffic stops. While we support efforts to improve public safety, this legislation encroaches on the fundamental duties of licensed peace officers and presents serious concerns regarding officer and public safety.

Conducting traffic stops is a core responsibility of law enforcement, requiring highly developed skills that licensed peace officers hone daily through training and real-world experience. Each stop is unique, with rapidly evolving circumstances that demand quick, informed decision-making. Officers must read body language, assess behavior, and anticipate potential risks while balancing enforcement with de-escalation. These skills are not just taught; they are refined through years of experience in the field.

Traffic stops are also one of the most unpredictable and potentially dangerous aspects of policing. Officers rely on extensive training, experience, and discretion to assess each situation in real-time. By legislating specific procedures, HF 686 removes necessary flexibility from officers who must make split-second decisions to protect themselves and the public.

Additionally, this bill does not acknowledge that Minnesota's law enforcement agencies already provide extensive training on traffic stops, de-escalation tactics, and community engagement. Mandating a uniform statewide model policy fails to consider the diverse needs and operational realities of different communities across Minnesota. What may be effective in an urban environment may not be suitable for rural areas, where backup may be unavailable, response times are longer, and safety risks differ significantly.

HF 686 imposes unnecessary burdens on law enforcement agencies by requiring additional training and compliance measures without providing funding or demonstrating a clear public safety benefit. Effective training programs are already in place, ensuring that officers receive the necessary education to perform their duties responsibly and fairly.

For these reasons, we urge legislators to reject HF 686 and allow Minnesota's licensed peace officers to continue doing what they are trained and trusted to do—keep our communities safe through professional judgment, experience, and discretion.

Sincerely,

James Stuart

James Stuart
Executive Director
Minnesota Sheriffs' Association

Brian Peters

Brian Peters
Executive Director
MPPOA