MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Office of the Commissioner

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Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement

Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

Driver and Vehicle Services

Emergency Communication Networks

Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Minnesota State Patrol

Office of Communications

Office of Justice Programs

Office of Pipeline Safety

Office of Traffic Safety

State Fire Marshal

Re: Conference Committee on HF3230

Chair Latz, Chair Moller, and Members of the Conference Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on this important public safety package. Safety and Security at the capitol for legislators, for those who work at and visit the capitol is critical to ensure it continues to be a space where Minnesotans can gather to express their views and have their voices heard. I appreciate all the work that has gone into this bill thus far and its support of public safety.

I am grateful that both the House and Senate language includes onetime funding for the State Patrol to address the FY2026 general fund deficiency. Exceptional circumstances this fiscal year have increased overtime staffing and related costs, including supplemental executive, legislative, and judicial security; mutual aid related to the Annunciation school shooting and the deployment of the Mobile Response Team (MRT) in response to requested local assistance to keep Minnesotans safe during the federal immigration enforcement surge. Fully funding this general fund deficiency acknowledges the unprecedented events of the past year and will allow the State Patrol to sustain current service levels.

Weapons screening was among the highest priority recommendations in the Axtell report on capitol security and was also a recommendation from the Advisory Committee on Capitol Area Security (ACCAS). I appreciate that both the House and the Senate included funding for screening on an ongoing basis, and I'd like to see the committee adopt the funding levels of the Senate language that also matches the Governor's recommendation. This would allow for year-round screening at five entrances, including two public entrances.

Both the House and the Senate language provide funding for security enhancements across the Capitol complex, but the House language includes an amount lower than requested by the Governor. I'm hopeful that the committee will adopt the Senate position regarding these enhancements to allow the State Patrol to implement all of the highest priority capitol security items. These measures will provide for the safety of legislators, public visitors, and staff that work on the Capitol Complex, and I urge you to fund the security enhancements at the amounts recommended by the Governor.

Thank you to the chairs for their willingness to make changes to the sections of the bill that would create a new Legislatives Services Unit within the State Patrol. As the committee begins to discuss funding levels, I want to be clear that the new work created in this Legislative Services

Unit cannot be done without adequate resources. I'd also like to see funding included to reimburse local law enforcement when they assist in responding to threats against legislators. Partnership with local law enforcement is a critical piece of effectively responding to address threats against legislators and they do not have existing funding within their current budgets for this work. If these new duties are to be added, the legislature will need to provide additional resources to the State Patrol.

Thank you to both the House and the Senate for including funding for the Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) team at the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). The work of this team brings a holistic approach to all forms of targeted violence, and these additional resources enhance public safety and can prevent acts of violence before they occur.

I am grateful both the House and Senate language include the legislator notification language. Legislators providing this data to DPS will assist in timely and comprehensive communication in the event of emergencies, threats, or urgent public safety matters. I also support the language in the House bill that clarifies that the State Patrol is the lead agency for investigating criminal conduct within the buildings on the Capitol Complex.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony. The Department of Public Safety looks forward to continuing to work with the chairs, committee members, and staff to ensure this bill has adequate funding so that it can be effectively administered and accomplishes the committee's and our Agency's shared goals. Thank you for your support of public safety.

Sincerely,

Bob Jacobson
Commissioner, Department of Public Safety