



April 13, 2021

Members of the Judiciary and Civil Law Committee,

We are writing this letter on behalf of the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Minnesota Sheriffs Association (MSA), which collectively represent more than 300 police chiefs and 87 county sheriffs across Minnesota. We appreciate the opportunity to meet with you throughout this legislative session on your committee's priorities. Our two associations oppose the following bills being heard today HF1103, HF1104, HF640, HF600.

The viewing of body-worn camera footage 48 hours after an incident does not recognize how investigations are conducted. Current law already allows CLEO's to release body camera data for various reasons. Additionally, requiring officers to announce they are recording should be handled by agency policy. Officers should be focused on responding to a call rather than something like this.

We believe there is a clear misunderstanding about qualified immunity; and we oppose efforts to eliminate it. All government employees, including public officials, are protected by some form of immunity—not just law enforcement. This includes teachers, social workers, and mental health clinicians. This protection is essential because it ensures that officers' good faith actions, based on their understanding of the law at the time of the action, will not later be found to be unconstitutional. Additionally, testifiers have misled the committee. Qualified immunity does not provide protection of an officer from charges of criminal negligence, and it **does not** provide civil liability protection for an officer who knowingly violated constitutional rights.

Our associations appreciate that some changes have been made to the civilian review board bill but we do not support this bill. We oppose expanding the authority of these boards by granting them subpoena power, the power to create agency policy, and discipline authority.

Lastly, we oppose legalizing recreational marijuana. To pass such legislation will not make our communities safer and will increase youth access to this drug. At a time when our state is fighting an opioid epidemic and has serious drug trafficking cases across the state, we do not support making such a drug legal for recreational use.

Sincerely,

Jeff Potts
Executive Director
Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association

Bill Hutton
Executive Director
Minnesota Sherrifs Association