



MINNESOTA POLICE AND PEACE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

525 Park Street, Suite 250 St. Paul, MN 55103-2145
Phone: 651-291-1119 Website: www.mppoa.com

April 7, 2021

To: Representative Carlos Mariani, Chair, Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform Finance and Policy Committee and members

Re: Opposition to House Public Safety Omnibus Bill

Dear Chair Mariani and committee members:

The Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (MPPOA) represents Minnesota's 10,000+ public safety officials who hold active law enforcement licenses in the state of Minnesota. Members include police officers, correctional officers, dispatchers, and firefighters. The MPPOA is the largest association representing public safety professionals in the State of Minnesota.

MPPOA supports the following bills/proposals that were, unfortunately, not included in the Omnibus bill and should be prioritized to increase public safety:

- Funding \$35 million for the SAFE Account,
- The Arik Matson bill to strengthen penalties for deadly force assault of a police officer and other public officials,
- Delaying the new use of force standards so officers could be trained in this important new standard,
- Removing the sunset on important training for peace officers in the areas of de-escalation, conflict management and mediation and implicit bias, and
- Expanding background checks on non-licensed personnel.

MPPOA opposes several provisions in the House Public Safety Omnibus Bill as we believe they are detrimental to public safety in our state and damage the credibility and integrity of the law enforcement investigative process and jeopardize justice being served. Those provisions are:

- The viewing of body-worn camera footage 48 hours after an incident as it does not recognize how investigations are conducted,
- Requiring officers to announce they are being recorded, as this issue should be addressed in agency policy,
- Mandating quarterly reporting on no-knock warrants rather than yearly reports,
- Requiring CLEO's to report data on "informal complaints" of which are not defined and do not exist, there are only formal complaints,
- Unfunded in-service training mandates on local agencies,
- Granting civilian review boards subpoena power, the power to create agency policy, and discipline authority,
- Automatic expungement of numerous serious and violent crimes,
- Requiring agencies to refer emergency calls to a mental health crisis team when that is not feasible across the state.



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Lastly, there seems to be a misunderstanding about what qualified immunity is and why it exists, particularly after former committee testers have misled the committee. Qualified immunity is an essential legal provision for all government officials, including public officials, teachers, and law enforcement, which balances the public interest and also helps build trust in police, as officers act in good faith to protect society. It is particularly essential in recruiting and retaining quality police officers. It does NOT provide civil liability protection for an officer who knowingly violates constitutional rights. We don't need to study this issue: we need to educate people about its importance.

We support efforts to improve trust between citizens and law enforcement and improving policing practices, particularly regarding ensuring greater transparency, accountability, and increased training in law enforcement. We have consistently advocated and supported these measures to make policing better and improve our profession.

Sincerely,

Brian Peters
Executive Director
Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association



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