



Mid-session legislative update

To: Members of the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (MPPOA)

From: MPPOA Executive Director Brian Peters, Union and Federation presidents

Re: Mid-session legislative update

Minnesota's State Legislature has now completed 12 of 19 weeks of its (largely virtual) annual session in St. Paul. While the primary focus is on COVID-19 assistance and setting the state's two-year budget, issues related to police reform persist and remain extremely contentious.

Control of the legislative branch is split: Democrats have the majority of votes in the Minnesota House, while Republicans control the Senate. This means it is a challenge – and near impossible - to pass controversial legislation as it would need to be approved by both sides.

MPPOA is your main voice at the State Capitol and its staff and lobbyists work tirelessly – day and night – with Republicans and Democrats in the Minnesota House and Senate. Executive Director Brian Peters testifies, almost daily, in committee hearings to both support and oppose bills that affect law enforcement. (Of particularly interest to many is the Arik Matson bill to increase penalties for certain types of crimes and pay parity for officers.) Our intensive work this past election cycle also positioned law enforcement, and particularly MPPOA, as a leading voice with many legislators.

Our state's public safety labor unions work closely with MPPOA to provide information and resources to make sure no legislation passes that defunds, dismantles, or impedes the ability of police officers to do their jobs. Testifiers have been LELS, Conservation Officers, BCA, State Patrol, Department of Commerce and others.

Disappointingly, several urban Democrats have introduced extreme legislation that would affect law enforcement: new disclosure rules for body camera footage, altering use of force standards, and eliminating

qualified immunity – all representing more attempts to dismantle and defund police.

These dangerous bills will NOT become Minnesota law, and we take these bills very seriously, regardless of their chance of success. To be clear: our Republican allies who control the Minnesota Senate will not hear or pass these extreme bills, so they will not become law.

Qualified immunity is an essential legal provision for government officials, including law enforcement, which balances the public interest and also helps build trust in police. We know it is particularly essential in recruiting and retaining quality police officers. Qualified immunity protects a police officer from civil liability as long as their conduct does not violate clearly established laws or constitutional rights which should be known to a reasonable officer. Those that act incompetently or who knowingly violate the law are not protected by qualified immunity. The doctrine is necessary to protect officers acting reasonably while ensuring frivolous lawsuits to not proceed against officers.

We will continue our efforts at the State Capitol and will be in touch with further developments. In addition, please feel free to contact us with any questions, concerns, or for further information. Thank you for your good work and commitment.

Stay Safe and remember we are here for you and WE HAVE YOUR SIX!

Respectfully,

Brian Peters, Executive Director, MPPOA

Jeff Stilwell, President, MPPOA

Jim Mortenson, Executive Director, LELS

Jake Ayers, President, Law Enforcement Labor Services

Doug Henning, President, BCA Agents Association

Corey Willman, President, Benton County Deputies

Mike Perron, President, Bloomington Police Officers Federation

John Blasingame, President, Brooklyn Park Police Federation

Dan Boese, President, Duluth Police Federation

Tim Chmielewski, President, Hennepin County Sheriff's Deputies Association

Sherral Schmidt, President, Police Officers Federation of Minneapolis

Joe Stattelman, President, MN Conservation Officers Association

Steve Kritzeck, President, MN Commerce Fraud Agents Association

Wayne Hatlestad, President, MN Conservation Supervisors Association

Mike, LeDoux, President, MN State Patrol Troopers Association

Paul VanVoorhis, President, MN State Patrol Supervisors Association

Joe Wendt, President, Olmsted County Deputy Sheriff's Association

Allison Schaber, President, Ramsey County Deputy Sheriff's Federation

Craig Sammon, President, Rochester Police Officers Federation

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