



May 1, 2023

RE: Omnibus Public Safety Budget Conference Committee

Members of the Conference Committee,

On behalf of more than 300 police chiefs across Minnesota and another nearly 200 command level personnel we want to thank all of you for your hard work this session. This truly is a crossroads for law enforcement with unprecedented needs and an opportunity given the historic surplus. We are encouraged by your budget targets and hope it will result in a historic investment for local law enforcement needs.

Like most omnibus bills, there are several provisions we support, several we would like to work with you on to modify, and several we oppose. We look forward to working with you to fund important public safety needs and address the concerns that are outlined below:

Provisions MCPA Supports:

- Co-responder funding
- Police Recruitment Provisions: LETO/Pathways to policing and
- Body worn camera funding
- Criminal Background Checks
- Extreme Risk Protection Order
- We support the \$15 million for violent crime reduction but feel the funding should be prioritized over other grant programs in the House bill.
- Funding for bomb squad reimbursements.
- The recognition of the massive impact fentanyl is having across our state.

Provisions MCPA suggests modifying:

- We have concerns over the changes to the Philando Castile Training funds. This important training funding should not sunset. Any modification to these funds should start with eliminating the sunset for these important training areas. We do appreciate the inclusion of use of force training in the list.
- MCPA has worked with POST regarding the new POST data sharing provisions. The Executive Director of POST and MCPA are in agreement that amending the current bill language to allow a CLEO 45 days to provide the internal/Private misconduct investigative data is reasonable and prudent.

Positions MCPA oppose:

- We continue to oppose adding specific body worn camera (BWC) policy language into statute. We have held this position since we worked with the legislature to enact the BWC statute several years ago. The current bill language starting on lines 23.6 mandates recording for all police activity, excluding community engagement. While we do agree that the Body Camera systems should be activated while officers are actively engaged in calls for service. We feel this mandate is beyond what is practical or necessary. Additionally, this language will drive up the data storages cost for Body Camera programs beyond what agencies can afford. State law already requires police agencies to develop their Body Camera Programs in partnership with the community that they serve. We think decisions about how the agency uses their Body Cameras should be decided at the local level.
- We support any community who seeks to establish a civilian review entity. We oppose granting a civilian review entity subpoena and discipline authority. We believe this authority undermines the Police Chief's ability to effectively manage her or his department. Additionally, this has the potential to undermine a City Council or County Board's authority to determine policy for their law enforcement department. We support the current authority of a civilian review entity to provide recommendations to their Police Chief.
- The central storage of BWC data is unfeasible and the data should remain with the local agencies. This money would be better spent on grants to more agencies that need the technology.

Lastly, the biggest issue facing police agencies today is recruitment and retention. Addressing this crisis is MCPA's highest priority for this legislative session. There is a public safety aid package as part of the Senate Tax bill and included in the Governor's budget. This is a major priority that we hope all members of this conference committee will prioritize in a global budget deal.

Sincerely,



Jeff Potts
Executive Director
Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association