



MINNESOTA CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION

DEDICATED TO THE IDEALS OF PROFESSIONAL POLICING

February 18, 2019

Re: Support of House File 1149

Dear members of the Minnesota House:

On behalf of more than 300 police chiefs in our state, the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) supports House File 1149, a bill that will expand and improve the enforcement of DWI laws in our state.

Under current law, a conservation officer with the Department of Natural Resources can only arrest an impaired driver for DWI if that driver is on an off-road recreational vehicle, in a motorboat or while hunting. House File 1149 gives conservation officers in Minnesota the same authority regarding DWIs as other licensed peace officers, meaning they will have the authority to make DWI arrests of any and all impaired motorists on Minnesota roadways. Currently, when a conservation officer encounters an impaired motorist on the roadway, he or she must call a municipal police officer or county sheriff's deputy to make an arrest. This is a very inefficient use of law enforcement resources.

According to the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, 358 people died in traffic crashes in Minnesota in 2017 and 72 (20 percent) were in crashes involving drunk drivers. Also, more than 2,389 people suffered injuries in alcohol-related crashes that same year across our state.

Education and enforcement have together helped decrease those numbers in recent years. House File 1149 will help us continue this positive trend. It simply expands the DWI enforcement capabilities of Minnesota's licensed peace officers and helps our collective efforts to cut down on the number of horrible, tragic crashes attributed to drinking and driving.

We strongly encourage you to support the bill.

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