



Office of the Commissioner

445 Minnesota Street • Suite 1000 • Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-5100

Phone: 651.201.7160 • Fax: 651.297.5728 • TTY: 651.282.6555

dps.mn.gov

April 25, 2021

Alcohol
and Gambling
Enforcement

Bureau of
Criminal
Apprehension

Driver
and Vehicle
Services

Emergency
Communication
Networks

Homeland
Security and
Emergency
Management

Minnesota
State Patrol

Office of
Communications

Office of
Justice Programs

Office of
Pipeline Safety

Office of
Traffic Safety

State Fire
Marshal

Dear Chair Moran and Ways and Means Committee Members,

I am writing today in regards to HF 4608, the Omnibus Public Safety bill. In general this bill provides a strong investment in community safety and includes a number of the Governor's supplemental budget and policy items for the Department of Public Safety. We are grateful for the partnership and investments made in the Office of Justice Programs and community safety initiatives. There does however remain critical investments we'd hope would get further consideration as we move towards the end of session.

I am pleased to see included in the bill:

- Ongoing investment in the nation's first Missing and Murdered African American Women Office to identify and address the policies and practices that perpetuate harm against African American Women and Girls.
- Funding for Mutual Aid and Multi-Agency Emergency Training as was recommend in the Wilder report.
- The creation and ongoing funding for First Responder Wellness Office which will provide leadership and resources for improving the mental health of first responders statewide.
- Crossover/Dual-Status Youth Model Grants that coordinate services for youth who are both in the child welfare and juvenile justice system.
- BCA Cybersecurity upgrades to ensure the BCA can meet the FBI essential standards for cyber which are even more critical as President Biden has outlined.
- Local Government Emergency Management Grants to help all 87 counties, 11 federally recognized tribes and four cities of the first class prepare for natural disasters.
- Funding for Body Worn Cameras and Data Storage grants.
- Concurrent jurisdictional authority for the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe law enforcement.

This bill also provides a large overall investment to the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) in youth services, community crime prevention and intervention, and crime victim's services. I am concerned about the lack of needed Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault grant funding. Intimate Partner violence increased by 40% in 2020 and in one of our major cities women are one third of the murder victims. Due to declining funding from the Crime Victims Fund at the

April 25, 2022

federal level, Minnesota will have a \$15 million funding shortfall. We must ensure this gap is covered as without it we risk availability of services across the state that are critical as need increases.

Each day we are seeing reports of violent crime with almost 40 murders in the two largest cities, 4 murdered in Duluth and a 84 year old women carjacked in Washington county being just some of the most recent horrors that the state is being asked to assist in solving. Keeping the public safe and bringing criminals to justice are duties that the public are demanding. The Bureau of Criminal Apprehension's (BCA) budget request to combat the rising level of violent crime is a critical component of public safety. The BCA Violent Crime Proposal was developed based on the current demands for services and discussions with local police and communities about what they need from the BCA to improve their clearance rates of violent crime cases and keep their communities safe. The BCA provides specialized resources, expertise, and personnel to provide targeted assistance to our law enforcement partners all around the State as they work to keep their communities safe. We appreciate the inclusion of partial funding for analyst and lab resources in this bill however without additional investments in investigations (detectives) we will be unable to properly fulfill the current demands for services. It must be noted as drafted the Commerce bill currently provides more funding for state law enforcement than the public safety bill, which is not directed at the violent crime currently impacting our communities

Other areas not funded in this bill include Prevention, Intervention, and Enforcement community policing grants which would provide investments all over the state to allow communities to work with their local law enforcement on issues the community identifies as needing the most attention. The State Fire Marshal's office request to restore funding to the bomb squad reimbursement account that is utilized by local bomb squads statewide. The Alcohol and Gambling Division requested a small number of agents to keep up with the growing demand in the liquor industry.

Also not included in the bill are important policy items brought forward by DPS, I will highlight a few. Updates to the Minnesota Crime Victim Reparations Program that increase the likelihood that funds go to those in need. Updates to allow DPS to implement the Next Generation of 911 which allows the Minnesota 911 network to keep up with technology and support call, text, or talk to 911 from any device in any part of the state.

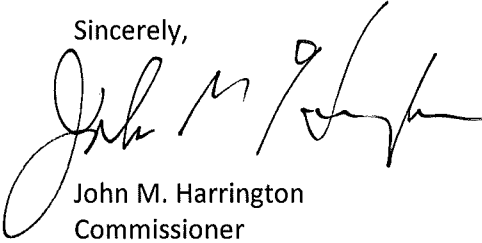
This bill also contains two provisions that were added via an amendment that I need to call out. The first amendment requires state law enforcement agencies to send civilian Internal Affairs (IA) staff into ongoing active protests, riots, dynamic events and active police scenes. DPS has deep concerns with this provision including how it would be implemented. This approach sets-up state civilian staff to be thrust into the middle of dangerous violent conflicts and could compromise their unique position as independent investigators. DPS is a leader in this space in Minnesota utilizing civilian investigators that do not reside within our law enforcement divisions and would welcome the opportunity to engage in those conversations with the legislature and other stakeholders about ombudsman or monitors however we strongly object to this approach as an unfunded mandate The second amendment added direct wine shipper language that was previously in the liquor omnibus bill. This will greatly increase the workload of DPS's Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division but does not provide the needed resources to complete this new work.

This bill makes important investments and can make Minnesota safer but I believe we can work together to make it even better. I look forward to working with you to ensure there is not duplication in our common goal for juvenile justice reform and focus on juvenile mental health and well being as the state mandated Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee is also working towards these goals.

April 25, 2022

I am confident we can continue to work together to find a resolution to these issues. The Department of Public Safety serves all communities to build a safer Minnesota. Thank you for making the investments to move this mission forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John M. Harrington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "H".

John M. Harrington
Commissioner