



February 2, 2022

Chair Warren Limmer
Senate Judiciary and Public Safety Finance and Policy

Re: Public Safety Funding Provisions

Chair Limmer and Members,

The Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage offers the following statement on the public safety funding provisions in SF 3223 (Senjem), SF 3328 (Gazelka), and SF 3059 (Pratt).

We commend the policy goal of recognizing and rewarding the good works of individual peace officers in Minnesota. The eligibility requirements for bonuses provided in SF 3223, including exemplary service, meritorious service, etc., will help incentivize high performance in our policing standards and practices. This type of stimulus is particularly important in geographic areas (districts, neighborhoods, etc.) that are burdened by disproportionately high rates of poverty and crime.

However, the proposed payment bonus measures cannot by themselves improve public safety outcomes in Minnesota. Regulations that encourage and require high performance standards by law enforcement departments and officers are just one part of the solution. Another critical component is for Minnesota to invest in home-grown community structures of public safety and violence prevention in high-poverty and high-crime areas. Our Council recommends that your committee seek and pass legislation that provides grants to community organizations that will expand community violence interruption programs, mental health and crisis-intervention services, restorative justice programs, and other public safety services in high-crime areas.

Thanks for considering this request. We look forward to working with you on these public safety funding measures.

Sincerely,

Linda Sloan | Executive Director
Theodore Rose | Legislative and Policy Director
Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage