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January 5, 2022

Michael Freeman
Hennepin County Attorney
C-2000 Government Center
300 South 6th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55487

Dear County Attorney Freeman,

I am writing today on behalf of the Hennepin County Chiefs of Police Association in strong support of the many correspondence you have recently received from many Mayors in Hennepin County regarding violent crime. As you are well aware violent crime has risen dramatically throughout the County over the last 2 years. As law enforcement leaders, we have been working diligently with our teams every day to combat this trend and keeping our communities safe, while also being focused on law enforcement reform to ensure all in our communities are treated fairly and respectfully. In addition, we have met with many elected officials to talk about the strategies we are taking towards this end and to request their assistance in making our communities safer.

In most of these discussions, a theme that continues to emerge is the importance of law enforcement apprehending violent criminals and the broader criminal justice system holding those criminals accountable for their violent actions for the sake of the many victims in our communities. As we have shared with you in the past, we believe law enforcement officers throughout the county are working hard at violent criminal apprehension, but we feel those criminals are consistently not being held accountable for their actions after they are arrested.

During these conversations, we are consistently being asked specifically what things we believe need to be done to address these discrepancies. As the Police Chiefs across the county, we collectively believe we need your immediate assistance and increased partnership in the following areas to ensure the victims of crime in our neighborhoods and our communities as a whole can see an end to this dangerous trend:

- **AGGRESSIVE PROSECUTION OF CASES** – The lack of real accountability for criminals is continuing to allow those criminals to keep committing more, and often more brazen and violent, crimes. Very consistently our officers and investigators arrest criminals only to receive notification that those arrested will not be charged with their crimes. There is an expectation that law enforcement will arrest criminals for their behavior. There must be the same expectation that those criminals are aggressively charged and prosecuted for their behavior as well. The County Attorney's Office's continued trend of not charging these cases, many involving guns and illicit drugs, needs to be urgently reevaluated.
- **BAIL REFORM NEEDS TO BE REVISITED.** All suspects arrested related to crimes of violence should be required to see a Judge for review and decisions about proper bail. This should be true for both adult and juvenile offenders and should include the crimes of auto theft and possession of stolen autos. While we are in complete agreement that criminal justice reform is important in all parts of the system to ensure all people are treated equitably, fairly, and in such a fashion as to help them move beyond their crimes, it is vital that violent criminals be held appropriately accountable at every step in that system.
- **STOP THE USE OF "SIGN & RELEASE" WARRANTS** for any crimes of violence, crimes involving weapons, domestic-related crimes, and felony-level person crimes. These warrants were generated because the individual did not complete the requirements placed upon them, usually including missing a court appearance. To expect that these individuals will comply with another of the same order continues to prove not effective in holding people accountable for their crimes.
- **JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER ADMISSION CRITERIA NEEDS TO BE REEVALUATED.** The current violent crime trend continues to include many juveniles. The current JDC admission criteria is very restrictive. This typically leaves law enforcement to immediately release repeat juvenile criminal offenders to situations where there is no or inadequate supervision. This also leads to the offenders not seeing a Judge in an appropriate timeframe to determine placement for them to ensure they are not back on the streets in a short time committing the same or more serious crimes.
- **RESPECT THE WORK OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WHILE HELPING TO IMPLEMENT NECESSARY REFORMS.** In order for the community to support effective law enforcement, your office must continually do the same. Again, every law enforcement agency in Hennepin County is working hard every day to improve how policing occurs and to aggressively address when issues are identified. We fully support the importance of holding law enforcement officers accountable when they do not perform as the community expects, including criminal charges when applicable. However, we also support recognizing when law enforcement is performed correctly and within the law and expect your office to do the same. One example of this would be the large number of officer-involved critical incidents that have been investigated and are sitting in your office waiting for charging decisions. Many of these have had completed

investigations for months or longer. In another example, you recently conducted a press conference to inform the community that your office would no longer prosecute cases where an officer is spit on, which is defined as an assault by Minnesota State Statute. Public sentiments like this do not speak to your support of law enforcement, nor do they set a foundation where criminals who are being properly and professionally arrested are going to respect the officers. We feel this does not help the current situations we find our communities in at all.

We can provide tangible examples, statistics, and victim impact statements to support the importance of the above steps to help combat the current alarming trends. Law Enforcement Officers in Hennepin County are working hard and subjected to dangerous situations every day. We are committed to ensure all people of our communities are safe and treated well. We sincerely want to work together with your office on these important issues. However, that partnership can only work if you engage with law enforcement before you single handedly make policy decisions that affect our agencies and communities.

It is my understanding that we have a meeting tentatively scheduled to discuss some of these issues on January 12, 2022. Hopefully this will be the start of some productive dialogue and increased partnership during the final year of your term and we stand ready to work with you for the long-term safety and well-being of all people in Hennepin County.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie K. Revering', written in a cursive style.

Stephanie K. Revering, Chief of Police, Crystal Police Department
President, Hennepin Chiefs of Police Association