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May 5, 2023

David Titus, President
Craig Anderson, Vice President
Brian Peters, Executive Director
Jonathan Jacobson, Treasurer
Sherral Schmidt, Secretary
Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association
525 Park Street, Suite 250
St. Paul, MN 55103

RE: H.F. 1234/S.F. 1959

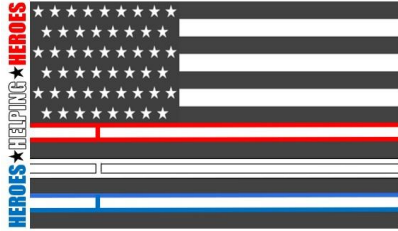
MPPOA Executive Board:

Through this letter, we respectfully request that the MPPOA Board of Directors oppose the financial offsets set forth in House File 1234 and its companion bill, Senate File 1959. These offsets, which will retroactively apply, will have significant consequences to those receiving a duty disability. Additionally, we urge that the board members' previous and future votes be posted publicly. Representative Her and Senator Frenz have repeatedly stated that MPPOA represented injured officers during stakeholder meetings.

As you are aware, the proposed offsets would modify the current statutory scheme. This unfair and unjust action would directly impact injured police officers that MPPOA represented during this process. Not a single current duty disability recipient was consulted by MPPOA or any of the other numerous "stakeholders" in the past two years. This is contradictory to statements made by members of the Minnesota House of Representatives and Senate.

We have repeatedly been told the proposed financial offsets will **not** help the overall health of the PERA Police and Fire fund. This sentiment was echoed by Representative Her, the bill's author. In fact, recent numbers show that as little as \$1.6 million dollars will be recouped. This number is statistically insignificant to PERA, but is devastating for the injured officer.

Individuals from our organization have recently spoken to board members from MPPOA. These board members stated that the information provided during consideration of the bill is significantly different than what is proposed in the bill itself. Many of these board members no longer support the H.F. 1234/S.F. 1959, specifically the offsets. It is clear that voting members were given information that, at a minimum, was misleading.



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This morning, an amendment was proposed to give PERA \$2,500,000 in an effort to delay offsets until further studies could be conducted. The amendment was not passed.

Additionally, LELS, Minnesota's largest public safety union representing over 7,000 police, fire, 911 dispatchers, corrections and public safety support staff throughout the state of Minnesota opposed portions of the current bill. In particular, LELS opposes:

- PERA Offset #1 and #2 as written. These proposed pension penalties are punitive as they are written and could bankrupt some duty disabled PERA members or force them to quit their reemployment jobs because they would literally be working for free. There have been options provided to the legislature that can and will work and would assist to make the police and fire fund healthy. These suggestions have been silenced and have not been allowed to be part of any legitimate discussions on improving this bill.
- Retroactive PERA penalties. Our current duty-disabled pension members retired under a certain set of rules and now those rules are being changed on them after the fact. Their household finances have been set up under these rules and now they are being drastically changed.
- The "Burden of Proof" is shifted to Employee vs PERA if pension eligibility is contested by PERA. The courts have already ruled that the burden of proof is on PERA and not the Employee.

We request that all voting MPPOA Board Members make their vote on this issue publicly. Transparency is vital to ensuring that the community is informed of MPPOA's decision-making process. Making your votes public will demonstrate your commitment to accountability to your members. Injured officers, who for years paid dues to your organization, need help more than ever. We implore you not to turn your backs on us.

Respectfully,

Chris Steward, President
Brian Hasselman, Secretary
Jess Donahue, Director
Jen Yackley, Director

Ross Taylor, Vice President
Terry Kelley, Director
Louis Nanne, Director