



MINNESOTA CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION

DEDICATED TO THE IDEALS OF PROFESSIONAL POLICING

Representative Nick Zerwas
433 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

April 29, 2016

Dear Rep. Zerwas,

On behalf of more than 300 police chiefs in our state, the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) stands in support of House File 2803, which requires mandatory law enforcement notification when an individual is released, discharged or leaves early from a 72 Hour mental health hold.

The modification of notification requirements to 253B.05, subd. 3 is one of the MCPA's top legislative priorities for the 2016 session. Our members have seen a marked increase in the number of mental health related calls and are often the first responders when working with individuals in crisis.

According to a recent MCPA survey, approximately 95% of law enforcement agencies that responded to the survey say mental health related calls have increased over the last five years with 20% of agencies saying the calls have more than doubled in that time. Oftentimes, our agencies are trying to assist the same people over and over – sometimes within hours after transporting them for treatment.

We know that many of these calls for service result in an officer using some level of force.

House File 2803 will not solve this issue entirely. But we believe it help law enforcement be better informed and better prepared for these types of calls and very well could prevent tragedies from taken place.

Thank you for your leadership on this important and pervasive public safety issue.

Sincerely,

Andy Skoogman
Executive Director, Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association