

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



Office of the Commissioner

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April 7, 2017

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

Chair Warren Limmer
Senate Judiciary and Public Safety
Finance and Policy Committee
95 University Avenue W, Room 3221
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Tony Cornish
House Public Safety and Crime
Prevention Policy and Finance
Committee
369 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Chairs Limmer and Cornish,

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to public safety, a core function of state government and the mission of our agency.

As we have discussed with you and testified to in your committees, there are key proposals in the Governor's budget that we strongly believe are critical for the ongoing work of the Department of Public Safety.

These key investments will enable us to assist and support stakeholders such as local law enforcement agencies, the courts, and counties and cities.

Unfortunately, the following essential proposals are not fully funded between the current versions of the House and Senate bills:

- **Increased firearms evidence staffing at the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension** to reduce turnaround times for local agencies.
- **Homicide and narcotics investigators and analysts at the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension** to work complex investigations and support local communities and criminal justice partners.
- **Field Agents and Educator for the Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement Division** to address significant industry growth.
- **Replenishing the State Disaster Contingency Account** to help communities in times of disaster.
- **Funding to support the current operations at current levels in the Department of Public Safety.**
- **Violent Crime Enforcement Teams funding** to help local communities in fighting the ongoing drug epidemic throughout Minnesota.

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Sen. Limmer and Rep. Cornish
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- **Rail and Pipeline Safety Account funding** to provide ongoing training for local responders.

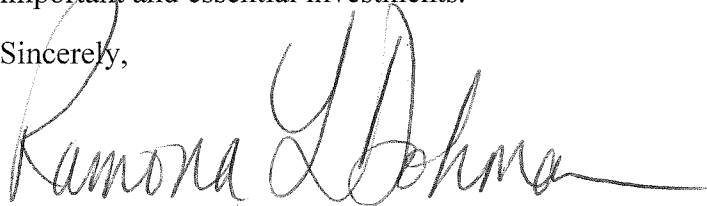
And these proposals were not included in either bill:

- **Ongoing support of the Criminal History System**, a critical backbone for providing criminal justice partners with up-to-date and accurate information.
- **Drug Monitoring Analyst** to address increasing drug threats with our agency partners.
- **Roseau County Flood Reimbursement Flood Mitigation** work not reimbursed by FEMA.

Additional information regarding each of these proposals is attached.

The Department respectfully requests that you and the committee fully fund each of these critical public safety needs. Thank you for your consideration of these important and essential investments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ramona L. Dohman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Commissioner Ramona L. Dohman

Thank you for partially-funding the following proposals between the House and Senate bills. We respectfully request full funding for these investments:

DPS	Operational Increase	\$3.24 million (FY 18)/ \$4.64 million (FY 19)
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Funding to support the current operations at current levels in the Department of Public Safety. Funding for the agency has not kept pace with the rising costs of ensuring that the Department has enough staff and operating funds to adequately provide its required services and support to all Minnesotans. While your partial support for this request will help address these cost increases, the Department will still need to employ additional cost saving measures. Without full funding, the result will likely include longer wait times for services, delays in projects, delays in inspections, and increased turnaround times.

BCA	Investigative Staffing Support	\$2.46 million/biennium (ongoing)
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Homicide and Narcotics Investigators and Analysts. The Department has seen a rise in requests for assistance in complex homicide and narcotics investigations, requiring an increasing number of hours devoted to each. Unfortunately, investigative staffing levels have remained the same or decreased. The BCA's role is to lead these large-scale, complex investigations because many communities throughout Minnesota do not have the resources or expertise to conduct them on their own. These additional BCA agents will be placed throughout Minnesota to meet both rural and urban needs. Without this investment, the BCA's capacity to work these complex narcotics and homicide investigations would be reduced, limiting its ability to fully meet the needs of local communities and criminal justice partners when they request these services.

BCA	Firearms Examiners	\$500,000/biennium (ongoing)
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Increase firearms evidence staffing to reduce turnaround times. The number of cases requiring firearms examination has nearly doubled in the past five years, while staffing has not kept pace. The BCA has 360 cases waiting to be processed and the caseload is growing. The processing time will reach 12 months by the end of 2017. Without the investment for two additional firearms analysts, processing times for this type of analysis will continue to increase. Evidence analysis is a core BCA function. Without full funding, increased processing times may delay the criminal justice process, jeopardize individuals' civil liberties and may impact public safety if there is not quick resolution to firearms analysis.

AGED	Field Agents and Educator	\$538,000/biennium ongoing
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Field Agents and Educator. Since 2010, the alcohol beverage industry has grown by 14 percent. Due to the popularity and rapid growth of micro-breweries, micro-distilleries, farm wineries and brew-pubs, 16 classes of new alcohol beverage licenses have been created by the legislature. AGED has experienced a 90 percent growth in the number of licenses it issues and an 86 percent increase in the number of initial inspections completed by its three field agents. The industry standard is one field agent for 265 licenses. These three field agents are responsible for 27,809 licenses throughout Minnesota. As such, 91 percent of all licensees have not been re-contacted or inspected for compliance since the license issuance. In addition, the federal funding for the liquor liaison educator expires this year. The liquor liaison educator is often the first, and only point of contact, for city and county governments to provide education and "train the trainer" programs associated with responsible service, underage drinking, and preventing sales to obviously intoxicated persons. Without this full investment, AGED will not be able to provide

the oversight, inspection, regulation, and education expected by Minnesotans at a time when the alcohol industry is booming in MN.

HSEM	Disaster Contingency Account	\$20 million/biennium (one-time replenish)
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Replenishing the Disaster Contingency Account. The funds in the disaster assistance contingency account are needed to help communities recover from the effects of disasters. Under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 12, the state is committed to provide the 25 percent non-federal share for federally declared disasters and the 75 percent portions for state disasters. Over the past 20 years, the state has reimbursed approximately \$8 million a year for disaster relief. Minnesota experienced a significant amount of state disaster declarations during 2016. As a result, an additional \$20 million is requested to meet future federal and state obligations. Without adequate funds to reimburse communities, local communities will bear the full costs for recovery. In addition, special sessions will likely be needed to address future disasters.

HSEM	Bomb Squad Reimbursement	\$200,000/biennium (ongoing)
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Bomb Squad Reimbursement. For the last 15 years, the Department has had contracts with the law enforcement agencies of four local jurisdictions – Minneapolis, St. Paul, Bloomington, and the Crow Wing County Sheriff's Office – to provide bomb disposal services outside their regular service areas when requested by local law enforcement through the Minnesota Duty Officer. The four bomb squads are the only local teams in Minnesota that are trained and accredited by the FBI. These local bomb squads provide a critical service to the state of Minnesota. Because state funding is inadequate, the bomb squads are not reimbursed for all of their out-of-jurisdiction response costs.

OJP	Violent Crime Coordinating Council	\$2 million/biennium (ongoing)
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Violent Crime Enforcement Teams funding. The Governor proposed an investment of an additional \$1 million to expand funding for multijurisdictional task forces investigating narcotics, gangs, and violent crime called Violent Crime Enforcement Teams (VCETs). VCETs currently serve 70 counties, but the need is in all 87 counties. This investment helps local communities in fighting the ongoing drug epidemic throughout Minnesota.

HSEM	Rail and Pipeline Safety Account extension	\$3 million/biennium (ongoing assessment of the railroad and pipeline companies)
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Rail and Pipeline Safety Account. The Governor's proposal to remove the sunset is a critical step in continuing to educate, train, and exercise communities along rail and pipeline routes in Minnesota. The current funds enabled the state, railroad companies, and pipeline companies to come together to provide training for local responders. Ongoing funding will continue this work, in addition to advance opportunities, such as operational training, cold water training, regional evacuation planning grants, local exercise support, educational campaigns, and other investments that would assist local communities to prepare for an incident. The House proposal extends the sunset provision for the Rail and Pipeline Safety Account administered by the Department of Public Safety.

The Department requests your consideration to fully fund these key investments for the following reasons. These are not currently funded in either the House or Senate proposals:

BCA	Criminal History Maintenance	\$500,000/biennium (ongoing)
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Ongoing support of the Criminal History System. Funding is needed for ongoing system maintenance and support of the new criminal history system. This is a critical backbone system for providing criminal justice partners with up-to-date and accurate information. The Governor's budget included funding for two positions for ongoing maintenance of the new system that was funded by the legislature in 2013. The Department requested this funding in 2013, but it was not included.

BCA	Drug Monitoring Analyst	\$200,000/biennium (ongoing)
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Drug Monitoring Analyst. The BCA provides critical public safety services, such as information collection, analysis, and dissemination in such areas as drug trafficking. The Governor's budget proposes an investment of one analyst to address increasing drug threats with our agency partners and stakeholders. This would bolster work on combatting the opioid epidemic occurring in Minnesota with the aim of slowing future epidemics of all drugs.

Roseau County Flood Mitigation Reimbursement	\$2.8 million (one-time funding)
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Roseau County Flood Reimbursement Flood Mitigation. Roseau County was included in two federally-declared disaster areas following severe flooding in 1999 and 2002. Following these events, the county pursued construction of drainage ditches to protect the community from future flooding. This construction was not reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Association. This investment will help Roseau County by reimbursing them for this flood mitigation work.

Thank you for fully-funding the following Public Safety proposals between the House and Senate proposals:

BCA	Predatory Offender Registration System	\$4.1 million/biennium (FY 18-19)
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Replacing the Predatory Offender Registration System. We appreciate your support, to replace this statutorily mandated-system that has lost critical functionality and needs to be replaced, as confirmed by a FBI audit. The accuracy of this database is critical to public safety. We need the most up-to-date, accurate information on those required to register to meet the intent of the law and protect civil liberties.

BCA	Drug Chemistry Staff	\$300,000/biennium (ongoing)
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Drug Chemistry Lab Staff. The number of cases requiring controlled substance analysis has grown by 47 percent in the last five years. These external demands, along with the overall increase in case submissions, has resulted in an average turnaround-time (TAT) of over 80 days, more than double the acceptable TAT of 30 days. The BCA regularly receives feedback from prosecutors and judges stating that a TAT of 30 days or less is required to meet the needs of the courts.