

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 14, 2021

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PRESS RELEASE:

Sen. Jasinski, Rep. Petersburg introduce bill increasing penalties for attempted murder of police

(St. Paul, Minn.) – Minnesota Senator John Jasinski (R-Faribault) and Representative John Petersburg (R-Waseca) today introduced a bill which strengthens state criminal penalties against individuals who are convicted of attempted first-degree murder of a police officer, judge, prosecutor, or correctional officer. The legislation ([Senate File 82](#), House File XX) increases the minimum sentence from 20 years with release under supervision after two-third of the sentence is served to life incarceration with a minimum of 30 years in prison before being eligible for release.

The legislators were joined at a press conference in support of the bill by Officer Arik Matson, a Waseca police officer who was [nearly killed in the line of duty last January](#), as well as Officer Matson's wife Megan, Waseca County Attorney Rachel Cornelius, Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association Executive Director Brian Peters, and Law Enforcement Labor Services Executive Director Jim Mortenson.

Chief Senate Author State Senator John Jasinski (R-Faribault) said, **“We are incredibly grateful for Minnesota’s police officers who put their lives on the line, in the hardest of circumstances, to keep us safe. This common sense, pro-public safety measure that honors Officer Matson’s service -- and the service of every law enforcement officer -- by showing the community’s strong support for police and the tough work they do every day.”**

“By the grace of God, Officer Matson is able to tell us in person why this legislation is necessary,” State Representative John Petersburg (R-Waseca) said. **“By putting their lives on the line every day, members of law enforcement continue to prove that they are truly heroes. It’s very clear the current punishment for attempting to kill a peace officer and others involved in the apprehension of a criminal is too weak, and the very least state lawmakers can do is strengthen these penalties.”**

Waseca County Attorney Rachel Cornelius said, **“After prosecuting the case for the attempted murder of Officers Arik Matson, Officer Andrew Harren and Sergeant Tim Schroeder, it was clear there was a glaring gap in our current statutes. We provided for higher penalties for murder of police officers, but there was no similar increase in penalties for attempted murder. This legislation fixes that and gives prosecutors in Minnesota another tool in the toolbox to pursue violent criminals.”**

Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association Executive Director Brian Peters said, **“The thousands of officers who put their lives on the line to protect their fellow citizens and enforce laws deserve to know those who would seek to harm them will face greater penalties. We ask a lot of our public safety community and their families and this piece of legislation is a sign of the commitment we hold to those who work every day to make our communities safer.”**

Megan Matson, wife of Waseca Police Officer Arik Matson who was shot and critically wounded in the line of duty on January 6, 2020, said, **“Every day gets a little easier for our family, and we appreciate the support of the community as we move along in our journey. This legislation will help make sure law enforcement members and their families will have the full support of the justice system with them when a person tries to keep that law enforcement officer from ever seeing their family again.”**

Law Enforcement Labor Services (LELS) Executive Director Jim Mortenson said, **“Public safety officials face considerable danger in their day-to-day work. This proposal is a way for all of us to commit to supporting justice for those peace officers whose lives are threatened - just like Arik Matson and his bravery - as they continue to enter into dangerous situations on behalf of citizens of Minnesota.**

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The Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (MPPOA) represents Minnesota’s 10,000+ public safety officials who hold active law enforcement licenses in the state of Minnesota. Members include police officers, correctional officers, dispatchers, and firefighters. The MPPOA is the largest association representing public safety professionals in the State of Minnesota.