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Contact: Media@MPPOA.com or Executive Director of the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association Jeff Potts, 952-292-1128

Reaction from Minnesota law enforcement on today's court decision ruling in their favor on deadly force lawsuit

(St. Paul, Minn.) – Today Ramsey County District Court Chief Judge Leonardo Castro suspended a Minnesota law passed in 2020 (that went into effect on March 1, 2021) regarding law enforcement's "use of force" that would require officers to provide specific reasons to justify using lethal force. Today's court decision can be found [here](#). The law is now on hold until the lawsuit is resolved, as the motion for temporary injunctive relief was granted while the state's motion to dismiss was denied. The statute that existed prior to March 1, 2021, is now in effect pending further court decision, which will be put on an expedited track.

REACTION:

Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association Executive Director Brian Peters said, **"We're pleased with the court's decision and for progress toward improving this law. The Constitution protects us all, and it is important both law enforcement and their communities know the rules around deadly force."**

"Minnesota's police organizations are committed to upholding the law and serving the communities they are sworn to protect," said Minnesota Sheriffs' Association Executive Director Bill Hutton. **"In order to do so, however, all Minnesotans, including community members and police officers, require clarity in the law."**

Law Enforcement Labor Services Executive Director Jim Mortenson said, **"When it comes to laws regarding the use of deadly force, it is imperative that we get it right."**

According to Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association Executive Director Jeff Potts, **"The use of deadly force law must be constitutional to ensure a transparent process and a just outcome for everyone involved in these types of cases. This is an important step in obtaining clarity in the use of deadly force statute for our officers across Minnesota."**

Timeline:

In the summer of 2020, the Minnesota State Legislature amended the statutes that describe the acceptable uses of force by police officers, including Minnesota Statute §§ 609.06 and 609.066. Minnesota Statute § 609.066 establishes an affirmative defense for a criminal charge related to the use of force by a police officer, establishing the parameters for the right to use deadly force in protection of the officer or others. This lawsuit speaks to all citizens' 5th Amendment right against self-incrimination, among other concerns.

The lack of the new law's clarity has already resulted in refusal by some police chiefs and sheriffs in neighboring states to aid other local law enforcement agencies in Minnesota. Some law enforcement agencies in North Dakota, for example, have removed their officers from interstate task forces. (Please contact Media@MPPOA.com for more information and citation.)

When the 2021 Minnesota State Legislature failed to correct the deficiencies in the statute, filing of the lawsuit was necessary to ensure the constitutional rights of officers were protected while allowing time to create and implement the training necessary to protect officers and all citizens of the State of Minnesota.

On July 3, 2021, the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association, Minnesota Sheriffs' Association, Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association, and Law Enforcement Labor Services, Inc, collectively challenged the deadly force language and sued Governor Tim Walz and the State of Minnesota over the law. The court filing (complaint) can be found [here](#).

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The Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA), the Minnesota Sheriffs' Association (MSA), and the Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association (MPPOA) represent the state's 300+ police chiefs, 87 county sheriffs, and approximately 10,400 rank-and-file officers, respectively. Law Enforcement Labor Services (LELS) is Minnesota's largest public safety labor union (6,400+ members) specializing in representing law enforcement, fire, dispatch, corrections, and public safety support staff.