Montana Sheriffs & Peace Officers Association

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June 26, 2019

Law and Justice Interim Committee:

On behalf of the Montana Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association Board of Directors and MSPOA President, Allen Fulton, I write to recommend your interim committee dedicate significant time to issues which directly impact local law enforcement agencies and officers.

Our interim priorities do not deviate from our session priorities much and the issues outlined below deserve explicit time and attention, as they are complex and impact public safety.

Please include the following as you develop your interim committee work plan:

1. Montana Board of Crime Control Study
   This was a priority for MSPOA during the session. The purpose of the study is not to fault the Board of Crime Control or other entities, but rather take an objective look at the grant notification, education, dissemination, and allocation process since the BOCC became a bureau under the MT Department of Corrections. We want to ensure all applicable funds available to the state are used to fund local law enforcement projects, such as the drug task forces.

2. Oversight and Evaluation of the Montana POST Council
   Per HB 684, the Montana Peace Officer and Standards Training Council became a bureau under DOJ. POST is the moral compass for all law enforcement officers in the state and it is critical the POST Council continue to direct POST staff and act as the gatekeeper for all law enforcement certificates in Montana. We have had positive meetings with DOJ staff and see opportunity but request that this committee include local law enforcement officers and law enforcement associations, such as MSPOA, as part of the data gathering and evaluation mechanism. MSPOA will be interested and engaged in the POST/DOJ reporting requirements to your committee during the intrim.

3. Criminal Justice Oversight Council
   The Criminal Justice Oversight Council was expanded and extended per HB 369. This council must meet throughout the interim and report back to the Law and Justice Interim Committee. I cannot stress the importance of the Council enough. This is the mechanism you have, as legislators, and we have, as law enforcement officers impacted by the 2017 Justice Reinvestment bills, to evaluate the changes made to the criminal justice system and the impact to public safety.

4. DUI
   There were numerous DUI proposals during the 2019 session. MSPOA is committed to reducing the number of drunk drivers on Montana's roads and highways. MSPOA supported the reorganization and recodification in SB 65 and also supported some of the substantive changes aimed at repeat DUI offenders. We agree that treatment is a crucial component to the overall DUI picture. MSPOA encourages the Law and Justice Interim Committee to evaluate the current status of Montana's DUI laws and propose solutions.

Thank you for your consideration and please reach out as I am here as a resource.

Kind regards,

Nanette Gilbertson

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Executive Director