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House of Representatives

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

July 10, 2018

The Honorable Mike Turzai
Speaker, House of Representatives
139 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Speaker Turzai:

As you know well, each of us is elected to serve our constituents. We come to Harrisburg to address a myriad of issues, some of great importance to everyone and some that mean more to certain areas. We write to you now to implore you to allow every member to play an important role in an issue that affects every district in every neighborhood every day. We ask that you call us back for a return to Session to focus on one agenda; *Law Enforcement Safety and Accountability*.

Let us be absolutely clear that this is by no means a witch-hunt or a knee jerk reaction to what has become a repetitive cycle of incidents involving law enforcement and the tragic death of young African American men. The reality is there has been an ongoing erosion of public trust occurring all over the country. Despite a deeply troubling feeling that none of these deaths should have happened, we still understand the pressure and uncertainty of what will come each day for every man and women willing to put on a uniform or a badge. It is truly no small task to ask of anyone.

This is also exactly why we believe Pennsylvania can lead by example by returning to Session to spend time dedicated to examining our laws and making changes in an effort to establish higher standards of accountability and professionalism for those who choose a career of service to their communities. We can all agree these individuals work in an unpredictable atmosphere and are constantly being tested. This is all the more reason for us to help them by establishing greater defined boundaries, so they can do their job and their communities can trust the process.

These ideals of confidence and belief in those who protect us should never be in question. It is incumbent on us to ensure our laws provide law enforcement with the tools and training they need to make life or death decisions, with the hope it enables them to always choose life. By doing our part to help guide law enforcement through these kinds of life altering decisions, we can be the difference.

There have been numerous bills introduced over many years, as well as various caucuses formed among members, seeking to come together to address this issue. We deal with legislation trying

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MEMBER

to address crime on a regular basis because we know how important it is. That is why you have a historic opportunity to bring everyone together to focus on the other side of the coin. No one is looking to demonize or demean law enforcement. We all know they play an integral role in our communities. We simply want to ensure we've done everything we can do to provide them with the tools and training critical to enabling their success and increasing the public's trust.

Again, we strongly urge you to call the members back to Harrisburg to focus on an agenda regarding *Law Enforcement Safety and Accountability*. This is long overdue and the time is right. We look forward to working with you and all of our colleagues on such a vital matter.

Respectfully,



Jake Wheatley, Jr.
State Representative
19th Legislative District



Austin Davis
State Representative
35th Legislative District



Ed Gainey
State Representative
24th Legislative District



Dan Miller
State Representative
42nd Legislative District



Frank Dermody
State Representative
33rd Legislative District



Dan Deasy
State Representative
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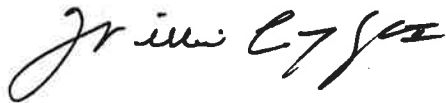
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