



Dear Hennepin County Commissioners,

As Mayors and Police Chiefs of Hennepin County cities, we write to express serious concern about recent statements made by Commissioner Marion Greene regarding the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office role. Commissioner Greene stated publicly that she is "not willing to fund the sheriff to provide public safety for Hennepin County," and suggested that public safety on the streets is not the Sheriff's responsibility, that it belongs solely to local police departments. As the leaders of those local police departments, that is news to us.

Public safety in Hennepin County is a shared responsibility, and the Sheriff's Office is an indispensable part of that ecosystem. Some communities, like Greenfield, have no local police department and rely entirely on the Sheriff's Office for primary patrol. The vast majority of cities rely on the Sheriff for 911 dispatch, crime lab services, and investigative support. Every city benefits from Sheriff's Office-led task forces. And every city depends on the continued function of the Hennepin County Adult Detention Center.

This is not abstract. Our cities benefit from this work every single day. To give a few examples, Sheriff's Office deputies arrived within minutes of the Annunciation Church shooting to aid victims and process the scene. Sheriff's Office analysts and crime scene investigators worked nights processing evidence from the fatal shooting of Officer Jamal Mitchell. From a hostage situation in Corcoran, to a carjacking in Greenfield, to an encampment homicide in Minneapolis, our communities rely on the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office to deal with our most critical public safety threats.

The Sheriff's statutory obligation under Minnesota law is to "keep and preserve the peace" within the county, a mandate that is long-established and essential. Commissioner Greene's suggestion that local police departments can absorb this responsibility is not grounded in reality, tradition, or Minnesota law.

The data makes this plain. The Minneapolis metro already ranks among the lowest in police staffing per capita in the country. In a comparison of the twelve most similarly sized cities nationally, Minneapolis ranked second-lowest in combined police and sheriff staffing, above only Omaha, Nebraska. Remove the Sheriff's support and we would rank lowest in the country by a wide margin.

This is not a hypothetical. Crimes would go unsolved. 9-1-1 calls would go unanswered. Public safety would suffer. All of our residents would pay the price.

We share your budgetary concerns and face many of the same pressures in our own cities. But public safety is a primary obligation of elected officials at every level. The Sheriff's Office represents approximately 6% of the Hennepin County operating budget. We need that investment. We encourage you to fund it appropriately.

Erik Fadden, Public Safety Director, Plymouth
Julie Maas-Kusske, Mayor, Maple Plain
Jacob Frey, Mayor, Minneapolis
Brian O'Hara, Chief of Police, Minneapolis
Tim Busse, Mayor, Bloomington
Booker Hodges, Chief of Police, Bloomington
Garett Flesland, Chief of Police, Brooklyn Center
Mark Bruley, Chief of Police, Brooklyn Park
Tom McKee, Mayor, Corcoran
Matthew Gottschalk, Director of Public Safety, Corcoran
Julie Deshler, Mayor, Crystal
Brian Hubbard, Chief of Police, Crystal
Paul Enga, Chief of Police, Dayton
Cory Johnson, Chief of Police, Deephaven
Ron Case, Mayor, Eden Prairie
Nick Roehl, Mayor, Greenfield
Tom Fletcher, Mayor, Greenwood
Brad Spencer, Mayor, Independence
Charlie Miner, Mayor, Long Lake
Chris Heim, Mayor, Medicine Lake
Todd Albers, Mayor, Medina
Jason Nelson, Chief of Police, Medina
Jason Ohotto, Chief of Police, Minneapolis Park Police
Scott Boerboom, Chief of Police, Minnetonka
Joe Pagano, Mayor, Minnetonka Beach
Lisa Whalen, Mayor, Minnetrista
Craig Squires, Director of Public Safety, Minnetrista
John Elder, Mayor, New Hope
Tim Hoyt, Chief of Police, New Hope
Robert Tunheim, Mayor, Orono
Correy Farniok, Chief of Police, Orono
Jeffry Wosje, Mayor, Plymouth
Brad Sutton, Mayor, Robbinsdale
Patrick Foley, Chief of Police, Robbinsdale
Shannon Klick, Mayor, Rogers
Jennifer Labadie, Mayor, Shorewood
Justin Ballsrud, Chief of Police, South Lake Police Department
Joshua Foust, Chief of Police, Three Rivers Park Police
Andrew Mullin, Mayor, Wayzata
Jamie Baker, Chief of Police, Wayzata
Matt DuRose, Director of Public Safety, West Hennepin Public Safety