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Testimony in Support of Assembly Bill 832 *Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice & Public Safety* January 12, 2022

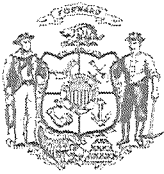
Members of the committee, thank you for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bill (AB) 832. I'm proud to bring forth legislation that supports our law enforcement throughout the state.

Today, Wisconsin has the lowest number of law enforcement officers working in at least a decade. Resignations are up; applications are down. If we care about our communities and our constituents who live there, something needs to be done and it needs to be done now.

AB 832, before you today, assists police departments across the state with recruitment and retention by aiding them with the costs associated with hiring new officers and recertifying existing ones. Currently, a police recruit must complete a series of academic training requirements, including 60 college credits and a required 720 hours of police academy. Additionally, they must undergo 24 hours of re-certification each year. The state reimburses the cost of police academy, if a recruit receives an offer of employment with an agency. Under our proposal, funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) would be used to reimburse the cost of police academy for all recruits, regardless of employment status with an agency.

Also, under state law, the state is required to reimburse a political subdivision \$160/officer for recertification training, which does not cover the cost of 24 hours of instruction. This means the law enforcement agency covers the remaining cost. While recertification costs vary by department, expenses can exceed \$600/officer. Our proposal would help departments cover the burdensome expense by using ARPA funds to double the reimbursement amount for the recertification training to \$320/officer.

Thank you again for allowing me to testify in support of AB 832. I hope to see your support on this important legislation.



ANDRÉ JACQUE

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*Testimony before the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
Senator André Jacque
January 12, 2022*

Chair Spiros and Members of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety,

Thank you for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 832, a proposal that increases law enforcement training reimbursement. This legislation is supported by the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association and the Wisconsin Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police.

To become a law enforcement officer, recruits must complete a series of academic training requirements including 60 college credits and a required 720 hours of police academy. In addition, officers must complete 24 hours of re-certification training each year. Under current law, the state reimburses the cost of police academy if a recruit receives an offer of employment with an agency. This bill would use ARPA funds to reimburse the cost of police academy for all recruits, regardless of employment status with an agency.

Current law also requires the state to reimburse a political subdivision \$160 per officer for recertification training. Obviously, this amount does not cover the cost of 24 hours of instruction, requiring the law enforcement agency to cover the remaining cost. While recertification costs vary by department, expenses can exceed \$600 per officer. This bill would require ARPA funds be used to double the reimbursement amount for recertification training to \$320 per officer.

Training reimbursements are paid from the penalty surcharge fund, however, this fund has recently been operating in deficit causing a delay in payments to local departments. This bill will require ARPA funds be used to ensure adequate funding is available to provide full and timely reimbursements for law enforcement training.

Thank you for your consideration of Assembly Bill 832.



January 12, 2022

To: Chairman Spiros and Members of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

From: Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association

Re: Support Assembly Bill 832, Increasing Law Enforcement Training Reimbursement and Support for Self-Sponsored Academy Attendees

Chairman Spiros, thank you for your willingness to hold a hearing on this legislation. We would also like to thank the Assembly authors, Representative Callahan and Representative Armstrong, for introducing this important bill. We are also appreciative of our lead Senate author Senator Jacque.

We urge support of Assembly Bill 832, as well as the full legislative package aimed at helping Wisconsin have additional qualified and well-trained officers serving in our communities. We are appreciative of the leadership of Speaker Vos and legislative Republicans for working with law enforcement from across the state on important policy solutions like this bill. We hope these bills can gain bipartisan support.

Wisconsin currently reimburses \$160 per officer for recertification training. Our departments know this amount does not cover the cost of the required 24 hours of instruction. What this means is our local departments are required to pay for these additional costs, which costs each department hundreds of dollars per officer per year.

By doubling the reimbursement rate to \$320 per officer, our departments can better fund these critical training certifications. Additionally, our departments would be better equipped to provide officers with more specialized training to better respond to incidents in their community.

With the current training reimbursements funds paid from the penalty surcharge account, the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association supports ways to bring additional money into this account because of the continued deficit this account sees. This has caused a delay in payments to local departments.

Another important component of this legislation we support is state assistance with self-sponsored academy attendees. To become a law enforcement officer, recruits must complete a series of academic training requirements including 60 college credits and a



required 720 hours of police academy. This bill would reimburse the cost of police academy for all recruits – including self-sponsored academy attendees who are gaining training before having a position secured at a department in our state.

The Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association supports all additional measures that help our agencies employ the best and most qualified officers. This bill is another positive change that will assist this cause, and ensure we continue to keep our communities safe.

We would be happy to take any questions regarding this legislation.



To: Members, Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety
From: Badger State Sheriffs' Association
Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association
Date: January 12, 2022
**RE: Testimony in support of
AB 831, AB 832, AB 833, AB 834, and AB 837**

Chairman Spiros, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Kurt Picknell, and I am the Walworth County Sheriff as well as an active member of both the Badger State Sheriffs' Association and the Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association. Our organizations represent all of Wisconsin's 72 Sheriffs and over 1,000 deputies, corrections officers (jailers) and emergency communications dispatchers.

Across the state, we are facing an extraordinary decline in individuals joining and staying in law enforcement and public safety. A June survey of nearly 200 departments by the Police Executive Research Forum shows a startling 45% increase in the retirement rate and a nearly 20% increase in resignations in 2020-21 compared to the previous year. This concerning pattern continues during an uptick in crime across the state and nation with societal rhetoric devaluing the public safety profession.

There are multiple reasons influencing qualified applicants away from a career in public safety, leaving agencies to address unprecedented vacancies that drives overtime spending and increases the demand for current staff to work more scheduled shifts. To recruit and retain quality law enforcement professionals, we must refocus our efforts to ensure officers are invested in by their communities – this includes training, incentives, and the overall reconstruction of the positive highly valued role of policing in our society.

Before I make additional comments on each of the bills, I want to make sure the committee understands the scope of the issues our agencies are facing. We support the bills put before you today, but we urge the committee to consider expanding the scope to two other important public safety positions: emergency communications dispatchers and county correctional officers (jailers). Many counties across the state have faced shortages in these areas – which provide critical support for local police, county law enforcement and overall public safety. Specifically, we ask the committee to consider amending AB 837, AB 831 and AB832, which would provide grants and other related recruiting and training costs for law enforcement officer recruiting and bonuses for law enforcement officers, to include emergency communications dispatchers and county correctional officers (jailers).

In addition to AB 837, below are other comments on the bills before you today:

- AB 831 (marketing campaign): Law enforcement agencies need additional support to recruit new employees noted above. Across the state, agencies are putting up billboards,

holding informational forums at tech colleges and seeking qualified applicants from other jurisdictions. AB 831 will support and enhance these local efforts by dedicating \$1 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for a “Pro-Cop Wisconsin” marketing campaign.

- AB 832 (training reimbursement): Current state resources continue to be insufficient to cover all the costs associated law enforcement training. This bill directs federal funds to reimburse local and county governments for the preparatory and recertification training for their officers.
- AB 833 (part-time law enforcement): Law enforcement agencies, especially smaller agencies, will utilize part-time officers as a key element of their workforce. However, the costs to onboard, train and outfit part-time officers can be a barrier. This bill will support those smaller agencies in hiring part-time officers.
- AB 834 (search warrants): Under limited circumstances, law enforcement officers will seek judicial authority to execute no-knock search warrants. This legislation prevents local entities from abolishing this tool and ensures it can be utilized in those extremely high-risk situations.

These bills are an important step to recruit and retain quality public safety professionals. It is essential that the Wisconsin public recognizes that we must prioritize and appreciate those that risk their lives to protect the public.

On behalf of BSSA/WS&DSA, I appreciate this opportunity to speak on this critical issue. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I am happy to answer any questions you might have.



Department of Administration
Intergovernmental Relations Division

Tom Barrett
Mayor

Sharon Robinson
Director of Administration

Kimberly Montgomery
Director of Intergovernmental Relations

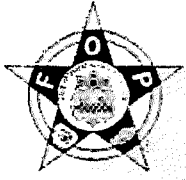
City of Milwaukee Testimony on AB 832, Relating to: increasing the law enforcement reimbursement; AB 834, Relating to: no-knock search warrants and certain expenditures of federal monies of first class cities; and AB 837 Relating to: grants for law enforcement officer recruiting and bonuses for law enforcement officers.

Thank you, Chairman Spiros, and fellow members of the Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, for the opportunity to provide testimony on AB 832, AB 834, and AB 837 on behalf of the City of Milwaukee.

The City of Milwaukee Supports AB 832, relating to increasing the law enforcement reimbursement. The City of Milwaukee commits a significant amount of resources toward the training of our more than 1,600 law enforcement officers. The cost to the City for training costs far outweighs the reimbursement that the City receives from the State. The training and recertification of law enforcement officers remains an essential aspect of both enhancing the public safety of our residents as well as ensuring our officers are training in the most up-to-date techniques. The State of Wisconsin has underfunded municipalities through inadequate shared revenue for far too long. This has forced cities like Milwaukee to face difficult financial decisions to maintain essential services for our residents. By increasing the reimbursement for new law enforcement hires and recertification of current officers, this legislation will help Milwaukee afford the significant costs of ongoing law enforcement training.

The City of Milwaukee opposes AB 834, relating to no-knock search warrants and certain expenditures of federal monies of first class cities. This legislation is another prime example of supposed "local control" being overridden by the Legislature. The Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission, after significant community and law enforcement input, and public discussion, voted in a public meeting on Nov. 18th to outlaw no-knock search warrants. The intention under Wis Stat §62.50 is for cities of the first class to have a community led board of commissioners who may proscribe policies and standards for the police and fire departments. Milwaukee's independent Fire and Police Commission determined that it was appropriate to ban no-knock search warrants in the City of Milwaukee. Reversing this decision through AB 834 is a move in the wrong direction and is a direct disregard of the authority and independence of Fire and Police Commissions throughout the State.

The City of Milwaukee currently spends over \$280 million in general purpose funds on the Milwaukee Police, over 40% of the City of Milwaukee entire budget. AB 834 would require Milwaukee to spend the same percentage of our Federal relief dollars on law enforcement as well, an additional \$157.6 million of ARPA funds. This is yet again another example of the Legislature spurning the idea of "local control" by directing only the City of Milwaukee on how it should use its federal relief money. Additionally, under direction from the United States



Wisconsin State Lodge *Fraternal Order of Police*



PO Box 206 West Bend, WI 53095

Ryan Windorff
President

Shane Wrucke
Secretary

January 12, 2022

Wisconsin Fraternal Order of Police Testimony in Support of Assembly Bills 831, 832, 833, 834, 837

Assembly Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

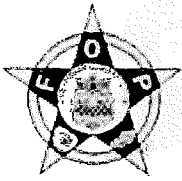
Thank you, Representative Spiros and fellow committee members, for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Assembly Bills 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 837. My name is Ryan Windorff, and I am the President of the Wisconsin State Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police.

The law enforcement profession in many areas of our country, including Wisconsin, is at a tipping point. We are seeing record numbers of officers retiring at the first opportunity they can, officers resigning prior to retirement to enter the private sector, and the lowest number of new officers entering the profession in a decade. There are many reasons for these trends, not the least of which is the erosion of respect for law enforcement coupled with public figures promoting anti-police rhetoric and efforts to defund departments. Additionally, the starting salaries of law enforcement officers often does not reflect the increasing educational qualifications we demand of our officers. All of this with the recognition that law enforcement is an increasingly dangerous profession. This past year, violence directed at law enforcement officers surged. In 2021, 346 officers were shot in the line of duty, 63 of whom were killed by gunfire. There were 103 ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers last year, which was an increase of 115% from 2020, and resulted in 130 officers being shot. Thirty of those officers were killed.

I have been contacted by many officers and had countless conversations about what is going on in our country, our state, and our communities. I have heard several officers that I know and respect tell me that they were considering leaving law enforcement because it is "no longer worth it". No longer worth it to work the hours they do, no longer worth it to sacrifice time with family and friends, no longer worth it to risk their lives to help complete strangers, and no longer worth it to deal with the worst our society has to offer when the public no longer supports them or even WANTS them.

I understand why one would have these feelings, and can empathize with them, however I personally have never been MORE PROUD to be a law enforcement officer. Who else would continue doing their jobs while being screamed at, spit on, villainized in the media and by some elected officials, and called "bastards" "racists" and many more labels. It takes a special kind of person to do that and continue to hold the line, and that's what we are.

We want officers to know that they are appreciated by the honest and law-abiding community members they



Wisconsin State Lodge *Fraternal Order of Police*



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Ryan Windorff
President

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Secretary

swore to protect. We want our young people to know that law enforcement is still a noble profession and that the people of our state value and appreciate those who dedicate their lives to it. We want people with diverse backgrounds looking for career changes to be financially able to make the change by allowing them to attend a law enforcement academy. And we want to recruit the best and the brightest officers from across the country to join us in Wisconsin, where we have the best trained and highest quality law enforcement in the country.

AB831, AB832, and AB837 would make great strides in correcting this dangerous direction we are heading. This legislation will show citizens of Wisconsin young and old, existing Wisconsin officers, and out of state officers that Wisconsin values their law enforcement officers and is willing to make an investment in them.

AB833 would provide much needed funding for smaller departments to onboard and equip part-time officers. In many areas of our state part-time officers are an essential part of providing law enforcement services to the community. These officers work patrol, special events, secure our courtrooms, perform prisoner transports, and other duties the same as full-time officers, budget constraints often mean that they are equipped with outdated and inferior equipment or required to purchase their own equipment. A properly fit ballistic vest alone can cost more than \$1,000 and needs to be replaced every five years. The Wisconsin FOP has for years administered a ballistic vest program where we purchase and equip officers with custom tailored ballistic vests if their departments do not supply them. Nearly all of the recipients of ballistic vests through this program have been part-time officers. Additionally, funding in this bill can be used by agencies to pay for physical exams, drug tests, and pre-employment psychological exams to ensure that these officers are fit for duty.

AB834 would restrict a county or municipality, a board of fire and police commissioners, a sheriff or chief, or mayor or common council from restricting a law enforcement officer's ability to seek or execute an unannounced or "no-knock" search warrant. No-knock search warrants are a necessary tool for law enforcement when certain dangerous circumstances arise. As someone who has executed hundreds of search warrants in my career, including no-knock search warrants, I can assure you that the safety of civilians and law enforcement personnel is the top priority when planning these complex operations. Although it is preferable to mitigate threats that would justify a no-knock warrant, sometimes it is unavoidable to meet an immediate law enforcement objective. There has been much discussion about no-knock search warrants after recent high-profile incidents but no collective data about their use and their outcomes. We previously testified in support of AB329 that would collect data on the use of no-knock warrants throughout the state. The data collected through the passage of that bill would be instrumental in fostering an honest, fact-based discussion about their prevalence and application. Arbitrarily banning the use of no-knock warrants, as we have seen in at least one city in Wisconsin, only endangers the lives of officers and citizens. This bill is imperative to preserve this tool for officers putting their lives on the line to arrest violent criminals and maintain consistency throughout our state.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.