

March 9, 2023

Senate State and Local Government Committee

HB 1309

Sen. Roers, Chair

For the record, I am Stephanie Dassinger Engebretson. I am appearing on behalf of the Chiefs of Police Association of North Dakota. I am also the deputy director and attorney for the North Dakota League of Cities.

The Chiefs of Police appear in opposition to HB 1309. This bill has generated a lot of discussion amongst the Chiefs, and they were very hesitant to oppose this bill. The Chiefs agree that the policy reasons that the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) have presented in favor of HB 1309 have merit; however, the Chiefs believe the same policy reasons exist to increase the multiplier for all of law enforcement officers in the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS) Public Safety System to 3% for the first 20 years of service. Further, the Chiefs believe that by increasing the retirement multiplier for only BCI Agents, it will further exacerbate the retention issues they have related to losing their experienced investigators to the BCI.

The Chiefs of Police believe this issue needs further work in the interim to see if there are ways to make sure that changing the retirement multiplier for one group of law enforcement does not unintentionally negatively impact the recruitment of officers for other law enforcement agencies.