

To: The Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure

From: Evan Bray, Executive Vice President Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers

Date: February 6th, 2007

Subject: Bill No. 20: The Gunshot and Stab Wounds Mandatory Reporting Act

Mr. Chairperson and Committee Members:

My name is Evan Bray and I am the Executive Vice-President of the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers (SFPO).

I am also on the Executive of the Regina Police Association, Saskatchewan representative on the Canadian Police Association and I have been a police officer with the Regina Police Service for 10 years. I work on the front lines in Patrol and I hold the rank of Corporal.

With me today are Darren Wilcox the Vice-President of the Regina Police Association and a Sergeant with the RPS, and Bernie Eiswirth the Executive Officer of the SFPO and a retired Regina police officer.

I represent the over 1000 police personnel that are members of the SFPO from police associations in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Weyburn and Estevan and the 2 Senior Officer associations in Regina and Saskatoon.

We commend the Government and the Opposition for coming together to get this important legislation to become law. We know you have heard from the Chiefs of Police Association on the bill so I will not repeat everything other than we support their presentation. We also know you want to ask questions of frontline members so we will leave plenty of time for questions.

There are a couple of issues that came up yesterday that I would like to address.

Privacy

Municipal police officers in Saskatchewan are governed by the Saskatchewan Police Act (1990) and any violation of privacy is investigated and members face discipline that could result in a police officer

losing their job. When police officers are hired they must take an oath of secrecy and confidentiality and privacy are drilled into officers from day one. Our reporting systems are secure and information is secure.

Health Care Providers

It is our experience that doctors and nurses we deal with want to cooperate in any way they can but since HIPA came into effect they feel constrained and they do not completely understand the legislation. It is our contention that health care workers be given education so they understand section 27(4) (a) which says they 'may' disclose to police if in the public interest. This legislation may not even be necessary if we change the 'may' in section 27(4) (a) to 'shall'. They are expected to report suspected child abuse and domestic abuse and should report anything they believe to be criminal in nature.

Investigations

Once police are aware of an injury caused by a criminal act an investigation is started and police must secure any evidence and interview anyone involved including anyone who had contact with the victim so we would like to know about the act as soon as possible so no evidence is lost. If a stab wound is reported and through investigation it is found to be an accident, that is what would be in the police report. This is what police do and there are rules in place to deal with any circumstance.

Recommendation

We encourage members of the legislature to enact this Bill in to law and we strongly suggest the bill be amended to include any injury caused by a criminal act. This legislation is important and we believe it could go even further to help with the safety of the public and the police.