



August 30, 2023

Governor Tim Walz
130 State Capitol 75 Rev Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Governor Walz,

With students and teachers returning to the classroom, we write to request an immediate special session to address the consequence of new legislation as it pertains to school resources officers. This new language is too vague and leaves police officers across the state without the needed confidence they can properly do their jobs to keep their school communities safe. With schools already in session, we need to act quickly to get school resource officers back where they belong.

The real-world impacts of this legislation are undeniable; students attending schools in Moorhead, Anoka, Coon Rapids, Andover, Rockford, Redwood Falls, St. Louis County, and a growing number of other communities have been forced to suspend or cancel SRO agreements. These decisions were all made after calls for clarity led to an advisory opinion from Attorney General Keith Ellison. A special session is needed to fix the law passed by the legislature just a few months ago.

School resource officers have a valued position in schools across the state. They are relied upon to both respond to direct challenges in schools as well as work within the schools to prevent problems. It is an unfortunate reality that there are times within the school day SROs are called upon to restrain students from causing harm to themselves, the school, or others in the building. We have all heard the concerns from SROs that they need legislative action to know they can do their job as they have been trained. Students and teachers are less safe than they were a year ago as a direct result of the loss of school resource officers.

Senate and House Republicans are ready to help address this urgent problem and ensure all members of our schools can have safe environments that promote learning and community. Let's show Minnesotans we can come together to correct this mistake, and return these law enforcement professionals to their posts as soon as possible.

We look forward to further conversations on this important matter.

Respectfully,

Minority Leader Lisa Demuth
Minnesota House of Representatives
District 13A

Minority Leader Senator Mark Johnson
Minnesota State Senate
District 01