

Pass Police Accountability legislation NOW - Women's March Minnesota - (4/21)

Bill info:

HF1078 House Public Safety Omnibus bill

SF970 Senate Public Safety Omnibus bill

House Public Safety omnibus (HF1078) has lots of police accountability provisions in it. It will be debated on the House floor TODAY (4/21).

The Senate version doesn't include any police accountability provisions. The Senate version (SF970) passed in the Senate last week and has been sent to the House.



What the bills do:

The House version contains, amongst many other measures, the following police accountability bills:

Strengthens Civilian Oversight (HF 640)

End Police-Only Responses to Mental Health Crisis Calls (HF 1686, SF 1924)

End Qualified Immunity (HF 1104, SF 580)

End No-Knock Warrants (HF 1762, SF 2139)

Require Police to Carry Professional Liability Insurance (HF 440, SF 815) - funds for study only

Require Access to Body Worn Camera Footage in Police Critical Incidents within 48 Hours (HF 1103, SF 807)

Hate Crimes - strengthens hate crime laws, updates Peace Officer training on handling hate crimes and provides support to victims (HF1691/SF2003)

Outlaws White Supremacy in MN Law Enforcement (HF593/SF1489)

The Senate version includes the bill to strengthen the MN sexual assault laws, and lifts the statute of limitations for criminal charges of criminal sexual conduct (both also in the House Public Safety omnibus), but does not include any police accountability provisions. The Senate Judiciary committee has not heard a single police accountability or reform bill so far this session.

Some background:

After the murder of George Floyd last summer, some police reform bills were passed in Special Session at Mn Legislature, with promises to continue working on policing and public safety reforms this session. This session the DFL controlled House has heard

and passed many police accountability bills. The GOP controlled Senate has heard no police accountability bills.

Coming under pressure after the killing of Daunte Wright last week, Senate Majority Leader Gazelka announced last Wednesday that the Senate would be holding fact-finding hearings and receive public input on police reform and accountability within two weeks, but would not promise that specific legislation would be heard in those meetings.

Gov. Tim Walz has demanded that the Legislature take action on police accountability bills this session.

The POCI Caucus has said: *“We are calling on Leader Gazelka, Speaker Hortman, and Governor Walz to suspend all policy and budget negotiations until both the House and Senate have heard and adopted legislation on police accountability. We will not tolerate delays, and we will not allow Leader Gazelka to use Black lives as a bargaining chip during budget negotiations on the final days of session. Our communities cannot wait any longer. The following policy recommendations must be adopted by both the House and Senate before we will continue the normal business or budget negotiations at the Senate:*

- *Allow local governments to establish civilian oversight councils*
- *Ban the alteration, erasure, or destruction of body-worn camera recordings and withholding footage*
- *End qualified immunity*
- *Prohibit peace officers from affiliating with white supremacist groups*
- *Provide funding for community organizations working to prevent crime”*

Who to contact:

- 1) **Your House Rep** - <https://www.gis.leg.mn/iMaps/districts/> - and tell them to vote YES on the police accountability bills in the Public Safety Omnibus being debated TODAY in the House and to do everything they can to make sure those bills stay in the omnibus going forward.
- 2) **Senate Majority Leader Gazelka**
Tel: 651-296-4875 Email: <https://www.senate.mn/members/email-form/1169> - and urge him to give proper hearings to police accountability bills so that they can pass into law this session.

Sample script:

House Rep -

Hi,

My name is..... , I live at and I am your constituent. I am calling you with WMM to urge you to vote YES to the provisions on police accountability and police reform that are in the House Public Safety omnibus. These include:(see list)

.....

People of color, particularly men of color, die at a much higher rate than white people at the hands of the police in MN. There seems to be 2 different systems of policing in MN, one for white people and the other for people of color. This is unacceptable. The police must be reformed, they must be held accountable for their actions and we must end the racism in MN law enforcement.

The police accountability bills in the Public Safety omnibus are a good start. Please vote YES on all of them when they come to the House floor for a vote. Please also do EVERYTHING you can to keep these bills in the omnibus as the negotiations begin between the House and the Senate versions of the Public Safety Omnibus.

This is the time to be bold, to hear what the people are calling for which is meaningful, transformative change in policing, so traffic stops don't end up with someone being shot to death by the police. Daunte Wright should be alive today, just as George Floyd should be.

If your Rep is in the POCI (People of Color and Indigenous people) Caucus, thank them for all their work to get police accountability bills passed into law this session and for their recent demand that budget and policy negotiations be suspended until both chambers have adopted POlice accountability legislation. Tell them you support them and urge them to stay strong. Ask them how you can help.

Senate Majority Leader Sen. Gazelka -

Hi,

My name is, I live in..... And I am calling you as Senate Majority Leader and I am calling as a member of ISP.

I am very concerned about the disproportionate rate at which people of color die in police encounters in Minnesota again and again.

I know there were some police reform bills passed last year after George Floyd was killed by MPD, but clearly more needs to be done. Daunte Wright's death proves that. The people in the streets every night this last week calling for police reform prove that. The raft of police accountability bills advocated for by MN community groups prove that too. All Minnesotans deserve to feel that the police are there to protect them and have their best interests at heart. These bills are a good place to start making this happen.

I was happy to learn that you are willing to have hearings on police reform this session, but then I realized that you said fact-finding hearings, and they need to be proper hearings. The Senate needs to hear these bills very soon and pass them into law. Here are some of the bills I really think would make a difference.(see list) MN needs police reform and we need it now. Please do not delay. The world is watching and so are we.