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NEWS RELEASE

Bruce Gordon, Director of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WORKING GROUP TO FOCUS ON POLICE-INVOLVED DEADLY FORCE ENCOUNTERS IN MINNESOTA

Attorney General, Public Safety Commissioner to Chair; Public Invited to Participate

ST. PAUL – Providing an opportunity for law enforcement, the community, and other stakeholders to discuss police-involved deadly force encounters is the goal of a new working group chaired by Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison and Department of Public Safety Commissioner John Harrington.

The working group will provide a framework to ensure all voices are heard in developing recommendations which may include state or local policy changes, updates to procedures, legislative initiatives, training, officer wellness, community healing, or recognition of best practices utilized by law enforcement agencies.

The working group will solicit feedback statewide in several ways, including witness testimony, online submissions and public comment.

Commissioner Harrington and Attorney General Ellison will serve as co-chairs of the 16-member body. The working group is comprised of people from various backgrounds and communities around the state.

“The time to discuss deadly-force incidents is not when one occurs. This working group will allow us to take a forward-looking, transparent view to arrive at recommendations for law enforcement and the community” said Commissioner Harrington. “From 2014 until today, there have been 101 officer involved shootings in Minnesota resulting in injury or death. Providing a place and framework for conversations to discuss how these incidents can be prevented and best handled will increase trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.”

“Officer-involved shootings have affected our communities in dramatic ways, not only in the metro area but across Minnesota. This working group is designed to gather in the best thinking from all concerned about how best to prevent, respond to, resolve, and heal from these events — with fairness, speed, and justice for everyone affected,” said Attorney General Ellison. “We’re going to be thorough: we’re seeking out and listening to folks from across law enforcement and the community and are asking everyone to be involved. We have the opportunity to make Minnesota a national leader on this front and we’re taking it.”

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The working group will convene a series of three hearings:

- Investigation, Oversight and Accountability
- Prevention and Training; Officer Wellness and Community Healing
- Policy and Legal Implications

Each hearing will have three to four panels; each panel will consist of 3-4 witnesses who will provide testimony relevant to the theme for the day. Panels and witnesses will represent community, academia, subject matter experts, law enforcement and prosecutors.

Hearings will be open to the public.

At the conclusion of each hearing, there will be a public comment period for feedback relevant to the topics discussed. All feedback – including witness testimony, in-person comments and email contact - will be documented for the record and considered during working group deliberations.

Hearing Dates and Times

- Hearing One: Saturday, Aug. 17. The topic will be Investigation, Oversight and Accountability.
- Hearing Two: Saturday, Sept. 28. The topic will be Prevention, Training, Officer Wellness and Community Healing.
- Hearing Three: Thursday, Oct. 17. The topic will be Policy and Legal Implications

Locations and additional details for each hearing will be announced in the near future and posted on the Department of Public Safety website at dps.mn.gov.

A final report will be prepared that will include recommendations for preventing, investigating, and prosecuting police-involved deadly force encounters. This is expected by February 2020. The Office of the Attorney General and Department of Public Safety are committed to continuing engagement on these issues with stakeholders beyond the final report.

About the Minnesota Department Public Safety

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) comprises 11 divisions where 2,100 employees operate programs in the areas of law enforcement, crime victim assistance, traffic safety, alcohol and gambling, emergency communications, fire safety, pipeline safety, driver licensing, vehicle registration and emergency management. DPS activity is anchored by three core principles: education, enforcement and prevention.

About the Office of the Minnesota Attorney General

The Minnesota Attorney General's office helps people live afford their lives and live with dignity and respect. The Attorney General is the chief legal officer of the State of Minnesota. The Office represents the State in all legal matters, and has broad power under law to protect Minnesotans from unfair, discriminatory, and illegal practices in business, commerce, and trade.

MINNESOTA WORKING GROUP ON POLICE-INVOLVED DEADLY FORCE ENCOUNTERS

Co-chairs

- Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison
- Minnesota Department of Public Safety Commissioner John Harrington

Members

- Medaria Arradondo, Minneapolis Police Chief
- Clarence Castile, Community Advocate
- Elizer Darris, ACLU-MN
- Matt Gottschalk, Director of Public Safety, Corcoran, representing Minnesota Police Chiefs Association
- Hodan Hassan, Minnesota Representative, District 62A
- Bill Ingebrigtsen, Minnesota Senator, District 8
- Honorable Mark Kappelhoff, Minnesota Fourth Judicial District
- Dr. Brittany Lewis, University of Minnesota, Center for Urban and Regional Affairs
- Brian Peters, Executive Director, Minnesota Police and Peace Officers Association
- Mark Rubin, St. Louis County Attorney, representing Minnesota County Attorneys Association
- Chanda Smith Baker, Minneapolis Foundation
- Kevin Torgerson, Olmsted County Sheriff, representing Minnesota Sheriffs Association
- Dr. Artika R. Tyner, University of St. Thomas School of Law; Center on Race, Leadership and Social Justice
- Tribal law enforcement representative – TBD (Appointee withdrew due to schedule conflicts)

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