

Minnesota State Patrol Troopers Association Statement

The Minnesota State Patrol Troopers Association (MSPTA), dedicated to ensuring the rights and well-being of Minnesota State Troopers, stands resolutely in defense of the troopers who tragically found themselves in a situation that necessitated the use of deadly force to halt a suspect attempting to flee in a vehicle while troopers were present inside. The MSPTA acknowledges the heartbreaking nature of the incident and extends its support to all those affected by this unfortunate tragedy.

In a deeply regrettable turn of events, the incident unfolded when troopers encountered a suspect who was the subject of a felony pickup order from an allied agency. This order was related to a domestic situation that required immediate action to ensure the safety of those involved. The troopers, bound by their legal duty to apprehend the driver, found themselves confronted with a rapidly evolving and potentially life-threatening scenario.

The MSPTA reiterates the significance of understanding the "reasonableness" standard, which requires assessment from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, at the time without the benefit of hindsight. In moments of crisis and danger, such as the one faced by the troopers, law enforcement officers are compelled to make instantaneous decisions within circumstances that are tense, uncertain, and rapidly changing. Their judgment about the necessary level of force must be evaluated within this context.

While we steadfastly support our troopers, we also emphasize the critical principles of accountability and transparency in law enforcement. Accountability ensures that actions taken by law enforcement are subject to review and scrutiny, and transparency fosters trust between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve.

Law enforcement officers are entrusted with the paramount responsibility of ensuring the safety and security of our communities. In this tragic incident, the trooper's use of deadly force was a result of their legal obligation to arrest the driver, who posed an imminent threat to both law enforcement personnel and the public at large by attempting to escape in a vehicle on a freeway. The MSPTA firmly asserts that the trooper's actions were driven by the commitment to fulfill their duty.

It is imperative to recognize that law enforcement officers undergo extensive training to prepare them for high-stress scenarios. Nonetheless, the inherent unpredictability of real-world situations often defies training and requires instant decisions that only those on the scene can truly comprehend. The troopers demonstrated their dedication to their duty and to the community.

Law enforcement professionals shoulder an immense responsibility, and their actions must be evaluated within the framework of the challenges they face daily. The MSPTA calls upon the community to offer unwavering support to these committed individuals who confront the difficult balance between public safety and upholding the principles that guide our society. The MSPTA will vigorously defend our troopers unjustly charged as a result of troopers fulfilling their legal responsibilities.

Mike LeDoux
President
Minnesota State Patrol Troopers Association