



BILL SCHUETTE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF MICHIGAN

May 23, 2014

Mr. Ken Grabowski – Legislative Director
Police Officers Association of Michigan
27056 Joy Road
Redford, MI 48239

Re: HB 5097

Dear Mr. Grabowski:

The first obligation of government is public safety. As the Chief Law Enforcement Officer of the State of Michigan, I am greatly interested in any legislation that would affect the safety of Michigan's citizens or impact the men and women who wear the uniform to provide that protection. For that reason I support House Bill 5097, which would eliminate the legal conflict between PA 54 and PA 312.

When PA 54 of 2011 was voted on by the legislature, the police and firefighter unions were advised that the legislation would have no impact on police and firefighters who were covered by Michigan's binding arbitration law (PA 312 of 1969). In fact, in that same session, the legislature also passed PA 116 of 2011 to update and streamline the binding arbitration process.

Unfortunately, PA 54 of 2011 is being applied to police and firefighter negotiations and it has been found to have the following detrimental consequences:

- Recruiting new top quality police and firefighters has become more difficult.
- Experienced police and firefighters are harder to retain.
- More contracts will be going into binding arbitration.

House Bill 5097 has been introduced by Representative John Walsh and Senate Bill 850 has been introduced by Senator Patrick Colbeck to rectify the problems attributed to the application of PA 54 to PA 312. I strongly support these identical measures and your efforts to pass this needed legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Schuette".

Bill Schuette
Attorney General