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**Testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
In Support of SB156
March 10, 2025**

Chair Humphries and Committee Members:

Our associations support SB156. The use of lasers against law enforcement has been an increasing issue. The issue started with occasional cases of lasers being pointed at police aircraft causing a temporary loss of night vision by the pilots. More recently they have been used against law enforcement during demonstrations and public disorder events. It has reached a point that laser blocking goggles are now being recommended for law enforcement tactical officers and officers engaged in crowd control.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police has issued a training bulletin on this issue. In it they provide an insight into the potential effects of lasers:

- The counter-optical effects of lasers directed against the eyes of individuals represent a far less recognized danger. The U.S. Air Force has conducted research into such ocular effects upon humans because of concerns over their use against pilots. The identified effects can range from the minor to the catastrophic:
 - Startle/distraction. This effect results from being surprised by an unexpected event and thus being unable to perform one's duties.
 - Glare. This effect is similar to looking into the sun or other bright light source with the outcome of only limited or possibly even no vision while laser illumination is present.
 - Flashblinding/afterimage. This effect is much like being exposed to a flashbulb in a darkened environment. Vision impairment may last from seconds to minutes. A police officer would be rendered relatively defenseless while in this condition.
 - Hemorrhages/lesions. This damage to the human eye occurs as a result of the ionization, thermal and photochemical processes. Corneal damage is painful but usually less severe than retinal damage, which is painless but can lead to irreversible loss of vision.

There is a federal law against shining a laser at an aircraft in operation. These cases would have to be prosecuted federally and state court prosecutions are often more practical. It does not cover anything other than aircraft. The federal law is 18 U.S. Code § 39A.

We urge you to pass the bill favorably.

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