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**Testimony to the House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee
In Support of SB45
March 11, 2019**

Chairman Jennings and Committee members:

Our associations support SB45. The proposals in this bill not only addresses the risk of law enforcement officers, but also others that respond to roadway incidents or repair. In addition to law enforcement, this includes employees of “. . . municipal fire department, volunteer and non-volunteer fire protection association, emergency management department, public works department or other similar public or private agency.” It also limits the applicability of the enhancement to when those officials are “. . . actually engaged in official duties of the department or agency.” (See page 14 lines 2-7 of the bill as amended by the Senate Committee of the Whole.)

Together, those provisions address the basis of the problem addressed in this bill. Incidents involving the covered acts resulting in injury or death to these workers are the direct result of choices made by the offender. Sadly, they are too often the results of a drunk driver, a drugged driver, or a driver engaging in other dangerous driving activity. And it is not just law enforcement that frequently pays a high price. As you know it is often people working in a construction zone, removing debris from the roadway, or other activity attempting to make our roadways safe and efficient. It is the conduct of a driver who chooses to drive while impaired or chooses to yield to the indicators that should result in more caution by the driver.

The proposed sentence enhancements are appropriate. We urge you to pass this bill favorably.

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