



# ***Law Enforcement Legislative Coalition***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**To set up an interview, please contact:**

**Chief Paul Williams – 417-864-1780**

**Chief Kurt Frisz – 636-357-4277**

**Chief Eric Schmitt – 417-294-3309**

**Chief Justin Arnold – 417-581-6600**

## **SAPA IS ANTI-POLICE, ANTI-VETERAN AND ANTI-GUN OWNER**

The Law Enforcement Legislative Coalition representing Police Chiefs and Law Enforcement leaders across the State of Missouri are voicing their concerns over a recent Missouri Senate Bill that's attempting to bring back the Second Amendment Preservation Act which was deemed unconstitutional by Federal Courts in 2024. LELC Leaders affirmatively state that the Second Amendment Preservation Act (SAPA) actually hurt gun owners, was anti-police and was discriminatory against veterans in hiring.

Chief Paul Williams, LELC Executive Board Member, noted that SAPA yielded legal opinions from legal counsel and insurance carriers for local governments across the state that forced some police departments to stop entering stolen firearms into the NCIC system, a system used to return stolen guns to their rightful owners. "Due to a SAPA prohibition on using federal systems related to gun ownership, many police departments across the state quit entering stolen firearms into the NCIC database. This meant that law enforcement would not be able to identify the legal owner and return the gun, once located; and if the gun was used in a crime, and recovered as evidence, it would most likely be destroyed when the case was adjudicated. That's NOT protecting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment rights of those gun owners." Williams further commented that this would make Missouri a safe-haven for selling and receiving stolen guns, while victimizing law-abiding gun owners.

Chief Kurt Frisz, President of the LELC, stated that gun lobbyists were attempting to manipulate law makers and were not prioritizing gun owners, "this is a money-making endeavor for a very small group of gun lobbyists who are trying to capitalize on the publicity instead of prioritizing second amendment rights. Our organization is trying to protect gun owners and victims of crime."

Chief Eric Schmitt, commented on SAPA's other effects on law enforcement. "The law had language written in it that prohibited the recoupment of attorney's fees for local governments and the elimination of immunities for all police officers in order to make suing police officers and police departments easier." Schmitt said that law enforcement agencies would have had to defend frivolous litigation using taxpayer dollars, with no chance of recovery or deterring future frivolous claims from the same individuals. "My concern is that anti-police people can sue our agencies for our tried-and-true crime fighting activities and we have no way to prevent it because we cannot recoup our legal fees for these frivolous lawsuits." "It's a waste of money and it encroaches on our ability to police and lower crime."

Chief Justin Arnold, stated that there were hiring restrictions in the previous SAPA law that discriminated against the hiring of veterans. He went on to explain that SAPA had a hiring restriction that prevented state or local governments from hiring anyone who worked for the federal government and participated in a federal gun case. "If we have a military police officer (a long standing and valuable source of recruits for police departments) who worked at one of the military bases within the state and participated in federal gun cases this may prevent us from hiring them." Arnold went on to state that this was problematic as federal law prohibits discrimination against military veterans for their military service. "Military veterans have risked their lives defending our freedoms, prohibitions on hiring them based on their military services is wrong."

LELC leaders are currently working with law makers to attempt to ensure that any new law does not make the same illegal and unconstitutional mistakes that the last law did by hindering or encroaching on law abiding gun owners, police officers or military veterans.

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