

EXHIBIT 3
DATE 2-9-05
HB 35



MONTANA

ASSOCIATION OF

CHIEFS OF POLICE

P.O. BOX 275 • GREAT FALLS, MT 59403-0275 • (406) 454-9091

To: Montana State Legislative Representatives
From: Frank Garner, President, Montana Association of Chiefs of Police
Subject: Compensation Equity for Montana Highway Patrol Officers
Date: January 5, 2005

As the president of the Montana Association of Chiefs of Police I am writing in support of compensation equity for the men and women of the Montana Highway Patrol.

As a police officer in this state for the past 19 years I have been very impressed with the character and the quality of officers that represent the Montana Highway Patrol. The Patrol has a reputation for recruiting qualified candidates that exhibit the kind of professionalism and values that should be the envy of those of us that wear a badge.

It is equally and unfortunately their reputation that the Patrol has been unsuccessful in retaining those officers. Many departments, including my own, having benefited from hiring those officers after they have been screened, trained and more importantly received valuable experience in the field.

There is a tremendous cost savings for those agencies that have successfully recruited these officers. Twenty five percent of the patrol division in my department is made up of veterans from the Patrol. The overriding consideration for most of them in leaving the Patrol was the drastic difference in salary potential between the Patrol and working for a municipal law enforcement agency.

Most of the chiefs I have spoken with across the state support pay equity for members of the patrol even though we recognize it would hurt our ability to recruit qualified candidates in the future. We support pay equity because we count on the Patrol's assistance in communities across the state and we recognize that it is in no ones best interest if the Patrol cannot retain trained and experienced officers.

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It is my hope that the Legislature will give the Montana Highway Patrol the tools necessary to retain qualified officers in an effort to support the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Montana. We appreciate your consideration on this matter and please feel free to contact me in the future if I can help provide any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Garner", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Frank Garner
President
Montana Association of Chiefs of Police