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The Honourable Michael A. Tibollo
Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Ontario
5100 Rutherford Rd Unit 3, Woodbridge, ON L4H 2J2
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Mental Health Service Calls

Dear Honourable Minister Tibollo,

The physical, mental, and emotional health of police officers and their civilian team-mates is critical to a safe and healthy society. We applaud the Police Association of Ontario (PAO) and the Ontario Provincial Police Association (OPPA) emphasis on mental health among police employees, and access to mental health services.

We also applaud the Ontario Chiefs of Police (OACP) support on mental health among police employees and concerns that existing mental health services may not be as effective as they could/should be in facilitating employees' full recovery.

We implore all relevant police sector stakeholders to work together to improve the support systems and processes associated to mental health support for police officers and civilian support as suggested by the Ontario Association Chiefs of Police (OACP) And we look forward to being a partner in the process.

On another related matter, the mental health related calls received by police continue to escalate, and we appreciate the need to see change on how individuals in crisis can be best supported. This calls for the province to develop a strategy that promotes a consistent integrated approach across Ontario which would support the best outcomes, adequate resources and supports needed to be put in place to effect change in communities.

The OAPSB with support of the Big 12 Police Service Boards request that the Province consider establishing a working group to look at developing a province-wide persons in crisis strategy (which would include mental health crisis calls) to ensure consistency in how these service calls are handled, while allowing for local variation as appropriate.

As calls for service within the mental health framework continues to rise within our communities it is critical that the Province convene or establish a collaboration table of Police, and Health care professionals to provide viable solutions to ensuring safe communities and to ensure those who need help are supported at the earliest opportunity. This should cut down costs and police resources and provide help for our vulnerable communities. OAPSB would be pleased to participate to advance work in this area.

Your truly,

Patrick Weaver
Chair

Bruce Chapman
Interim Executive Director

cc. Board of Directors, OAPSB