



THE HENNEPIN COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF PARAMEDICS AND EMTs
1325 WINTER ST, SUITE 102. MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55413

03/30/2025

Chair Frentz and Committee Members,

As the labor union representing over 200 paramedics, EMTs, and EMT/EMDs of Hennepin EMS, I am writing to express our strong support for HF 139/SF 1122, legislation that would provide much needed improvements to the retirement benefits of first responders in the PERA Police and Fire Plan. This bill seeks to address critical disparities by modestly increasing the post-retirement cost of living adjustment (COLA) and reducing the current waiting period for an initial COLA from three years to one year.

For over a decade, the PERA General Plan has provided a higher COLA adjustment than the Police and Fire Plan, creating a significant financial strain on public safety retirees. In 2024, cost of living increases totaled 17%, which permanent post-retirement adjustments increased by only 3%. Those who retired in the last three years have received no increase at all. While we acknowledge the financial investment that accompany these increases, it is necessary to ensure that first responders who have dedicated their lives to public safety are not left to struggle financially in retirement.

Our members do not receive Social Security and therefore lack the cost-of-living protections that many other retirees rely upon. The current system places an unfair burden on those who have served our communities with dedication and sacrifice. I respectfully urge you to support HF 139 and SF 1122 to correct this inequity and provide fair, sustainable retirement benefits for Minnesota's first responders.

Respectfully,

Shane Hallow

President

Hennepin County Association of Paramedics and EMTs