



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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Coleman Statement on Saint Paul Police Federation Ad

(Saint Paul) -- Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman released the following statement on the new radio ad released today by the Saint Paul Police Federation:

Today's release of a radio ad from the Saint Paul Police Federation is both troubling and unfortunate. We have spent the last year working with the SPPD, the City Council and community leaders across Saint Paul to develop strategies that will keep the crime rate in our city trending downward, and those efforts have been successful.

We also have worked to strengthen our relationship with leaders in the City of Minneapolis in an effort to speak with one voice in the face of cuts in state aid that have devastated our budgets and limited our ability to put needed resources into programs across the City, including public safety initiatives. The Federation's scare tactics are detrimental to our efforts to restore these resources

In the face of a \$16.5 million budget deficit going into 2007, we have continued to make public safety our highest priority. By the end of next year we will have added 28 officers to the department which will put us on pace to meet our goal of adding 100 by the end of 2009. Any assertion that anyone in the City of Saint Paul intends to cut staffing in the police department is categorically false. In fact, we will attain the highest complement of officers in the City's history.

I have been working with Chief Harrington over the last several months to develop a coherent, comprehensive public safety plan for the City of Saint Paul. This plan will reflect the need to strengthen our community policing efforts and increase staffing in the Police Department. As we have seen across the country, effectively reducing crime is as much about prevention as suppression and the solution has to be more than just adding officers.

Nationwide, we have seen the effects of community building as a crime fighting tool. San Diego, cited as the 4th safest city in the country, has fewer police per capita than the City of Saint Paul. They hold up effective community partnerships as the recipe for success in reducing violence and preventing crime. We will continue our efforts to partner with leaders across the City to build our neighborhoods and keep our City safe.

Make no mistake. The men and women of the Saint Paul Police Department are well trained, well equipped, and devoted to serving our City. They are working harder and smarter to keep our City safe, and we continue to celebrate their successes and honor their sacrifices. Simply put, the data used in this ad are outdated and used to scare the public. In reality, there were 22 homicides last year. There have been 13 this year, and 11 of those cases have yielded charges

On the whole, there are 1700 fewer crime victims in Saint Paul this year thanks to the extraordinary work of the Police Department.

Victims of crime aren't concerned about statistics. This is about the residents of Saint Paul and their ability to feel safe on our streets or in their homes.

This ad is misleading, wildly inappropriate, and does a disservice to the Saint Paul Police Department and the work they do every day in service to our City. Just when we hoped the season of political ads that choose scare tactics over meaningful public discourse was over, we see that Dave Titus has made the irresponsible choice to use outdated statistics and scare tactics to achieve his political ends. I hope that Mr. Titus will come to see that we serve the community best when we come together, and choose to use the Federation's resources in a more productive way going forward.

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