

July 7, 2016

Statement from Sean Gormley, executive director, Law Enforcement Labor Services, which represents more than 5,000 officers from across Minnesota, including those from the St. Anthony Police Department:

The death of Philando Castile is a terrible tragedy for all involved, especially for the family and loved ones of the deceased. The video being shown in the media is graphic. It's emotional. And for some it may be difficult to watch.

As the law enforcement union representing the officers involved in this incident, we know that people are angry and discouraged. People have questions and want answers. These feelings are completely understandable.

We support an open, thorough and objective investigation that we believe will, in time, provide the answers to the questions we all have. We also support the officers' right to due process. The right of due process is afforded to all Americans.

We know that law enforcement is dangerous and difficult work. We also know that doing that work requires maintaining trust and respect between officers and the communities that they serve. Preserving that trust and respect can be especially challenging following incidents like this.

It's critically important to remember, despite the graphic nature of the video, that there is still a great deal we don't know about what happened in this incident and why.

No matter what the facts eventually reveal about this case, we pledge to continue to identify ways to improve on the work we do to enforce the law and keep people and communities safe.