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STATEWIDE PUBLIC SURVEY CONDUCTED BY POLICE GROUP ILLUSTRATES CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

'This has been a year of deep division and we need to know where all of our residents stand'

(Madison, Wis) – The Wisconsin Professional Police Association (WPPA) released its 9th annual statewide survey this morning after a year of tumult, uncertainty and earnest calls for police reform. The poll, conducted the St. Norbert Strategic Research Institute, sampled a thousand Wisconsin residents in an effort a better understand the communities WPPA serves and to become part of the solution to the challenges facing our state.

“Since George Floyd’s death nearly a year ago, there have been widespread calls for a broad variety of reforms by policymakers and activists,” said Jim Palmer, WPPA executive director. “We wanted to use this year’s poll to really dig down and attempt to better understand how the public views the officers who serve their communities and the type of policing that people want from their local agencies. The results confirm that the issues surrounding policing are extraordinarily complex, and it’s clear that Wisconsinites support the interests of both social justice and the officers that keep our streets safe.”

WPPA released a [Summary Handout](#) that highlighted some key findings of the poll that include:

- **79%** strongly or somewhat approve of how ‘your local police force is handling its job’.
- **‘Keeping the community safe from crime’** was identified as the top priority for state and local governments, with no significant differences by demographics.
- **80%** agree that ‘having a well-funded police force improves quality of life in their community’ and **93%** agree that a ‘well-trained police force makes their community safer’.
- A majority of the public (**66%**) support spending more money for social programs, but not at the expense of their police department.
- Only **11%** of minorities believe that the police spend too much time in their neighborhoods and want to see the number of officers in their community decreased.
- A majority of the public (**59%**) support increasing local taxes to pay for specially-trained mental health officers and the same proportion favors new local taxes to pay for body worn cameras.

- More -

2-2-2-2 WPPA 2021 Poll Released

- **60%** of minorities consider equipping officers with body-worn cameras an immediate priority, compared to **44%** of whites.
- More respondents (**49%**) agree that an officer should be permitted to use chokehold in life threatening situations.
- **75%** strongly or somewhat favor a law protecting officers from retaliation for reporting 'instances of excessive force'.
- Only **35%** of minorities agreed that most of the individuals fatally shot by police officers in Wisconsin last year were armed. Data compiled by the WPPA demonstrates that **100%** of the fatal police shootings involved armed individuals.
- **87%** of the public agrees that there should stronger penalties for people that destroy property during protests.

"This poll illustrates to us not only what we're doing right with our approach, but more importantly where we need to evolve and grow to regain some of the trust we have lost," said Palmer.

The WPPA is the only law enforcement group in the country that has routinely surveyed its statewide residents on an annual basis to evolve its understanding of the issues and develop more informed policies that increase safety and improve service.

If you are interested in the full [WPPA 2021 PUBLIC SURVEY](#), please contact Jim Palmer at palmer@wppa.com.

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With more than 10,000 members from over 300 local association affiliates, the WPPA is Wisconsin's largest law-enforcement group. Its mission is to protect and promote public safety, as well as the interests of the dedicated men and women that serve to provide it.