

## Issue Brief



# Public Safety Staffing Shortages: House Bill 4688

## Background

In 2024, 72 percent of Michigan's local governments that provide or contract for law enforcement services face difficulties recruiting qualified law enforcement personnel. (*Michigan Public Policy Survey, 2024*) Despite the severe public safety personnel shortage counties face, legislation to include minimum staffing as a mandatory subject of bargaining awaits a vote on the House floor this fall. [House Bill 4688](#) would amend the Public Employees Relation Act (PERA), requiring the inclusion of minimum staffing levels as a subject of collective bargaining between a public employer and the representative of its police and fire department employees. This legislation poses a burden to counties already facing extreme staffing shortages in sheriff's offices and jails. Mandating minimum staffing as a subject of bargaining not only poses increased costs to counties, but also exacerbates staffing shortages and will lead to budget cuts in other essential areas.

## MAC's Efforts

MAC opposes HB 4688, alongside several other stakeholders, including the Michigan Municipal League, the Michigan Townships Association, the Michigan Sheriffs' Association, the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, the State 911 Committee, and more. In 2023, MAC successfully halted the passage of HB 4688 on the House floor. With a potentially heavy "lame duck" legislative session looming, it is crucial that HB 4688 does not pass the House before the end of 2024.

MAC continues to advocate for state investment into recruiting and retaining public safety officers at the county level. Proper investment from the state into local public safety would ensure sufficient staffing in sheriffs' offices, jails, and prosecutors' offices.



## Message to Lawmakers

- Counties face severe public safety staffing shortages that will be worsened by the passage of HB 4688, negatively impacting residents of your district. There is an already limited pool of resources to provide these services to residents.
- Minimum staffing would force counties to make budget cuts to other essential services.
- It is of the utmost importance to adequately staff county sheriffs' offices and jails; however, the focus needs to remain on recruitment and retention of public safety officers, NOT minimum staffing.