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Privatizing Police Responsibilities Will Impact Public Safety: PAO

AMO Report Recommendations to Cities and Province Concerns Police

The Police Association of Ontario (PAO) is concerned public safety is not a consideration in the Association of Municipalities for Ontario (AMO) report recommending the privatization of some police functions and responsibilities to the provincial government and municipalities.

“There is a reason why crime rates are low in this province, and that is because police officers are doing more to keep our province’s communities and neighbourhoods safe,” says PAO President Bruce Chapman. “The number of police officers per 100,000 people has steadily declined over the past four years at the same time as the population continues to increase – meaning the pressure should be on investing in, and not cutting police officers.”

In addition to recommending privatizing several areas of police services, AMO is also recommending an increased role for the province’s Special Investigation’s Unit and increasing civilian oversight.

“If you privatize some police services, who will oversee their regulations, investigate complaints and ensure they receive adequate safety training – the SIU only investigate police officer complaints, not private security companies” asks Chapman. “We believe the public should know if their municipality is considering employing security guards making minimum wage to investigate a break and enter into residences, silent alarms at small businesses, domestic disputes and car thefts.”

Chapman also believes AMO doesn’t fully understand the amount of training police officers go through in order to diffuse potentially volatile situations that increases public safety.

“Every day police officers are put into situations that could be life-threatening,” says Chapman. “It is always harder to measure what police officers prevent from happening at every call for assistance.”

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