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STATEMENT FROM THE WISCONSIN PROFESSIONAL POLICE ASSOCIATION ON THE RETIREMENT OF SENATOR VAN WANGGAARD

(MADISON, Wis.) Following Senator Van Wanggaard’s announcement that he will retire at the end of his term and not seek reelection, WPPA Executive Director Jim Palmer issued the following statement:

On behalf of the thousands of officers represented by the Wisconsin Professional Police Association, I extend my sincere gratitude to Senator Van Wanggaard for his many years of dedicated public service to the State of Wisconsin.

Before serving in the Wisconsin State Senate, Senator Wanggaard wore the uniform as a police officer with the Racine Police Department. That experience shaped his approach to public service and was evident throughout his legislative career. He brought a practical, informed, and steady voice to public safety discussions—grounded in real-world experience.

During his time in the legislature, Senator Wanggaard was a consistent and effective advocate for law enforcement officers and the communities they serve. His leadership on key public safety issues reflected both his professional background and his deep respect for the profession. The WPPA was proud to recognize his commitment by naming him a “WPPA Legislator of the Year” on multiple occasions.

Senator Wanggaard understood the realities and complexities of modern policing in a way that few policymakers do. He approached these issues with thoughtfulness, balance, and integrity, and never lost sight of the importance of ensuring that officers have the tools, protections, and support necessary to do their jobs safely and effectively. He has been a trusted partner to the law enforcement profession and his contributions will have a lasting impact on both the officers who serve and the communities they protect.

On behalf of our members across Wisconsin, I thank Senator Wanggaard for his service—as a police officer, a legislator, and a steadfast advocate for public safety. We wish him the very best in his retirement.

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*Representing more than 11,000 members from over 300 local association affiliates,
the WPPA is Wisconsin’s largest law enforcement group.*