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Rep. Paul Adams Offers Solutions Amidst Lawrence Public Safety Crisis

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The most recent public safety crisis in the City of Lawrence reflects a dangerous situation that demands immediate action.

Furthermore, we must address the underlying issues that have fostered ongoing violence, especially in the downtown area on weekend evenings.

Several commonsense actions will address the problems:

1. Call in the State Police to help patrol the city and maintain order. I wrote Governor Patrick emphatically requesting these additional state resources.
2. Permanently extend the proposed temporary policy to close bars and nightclubs one hour earlier (to 1 A.M.) on weekend evenings, which will allow for heightened police presence while patrons exit. This action is more consistent with alcohol policies of cities and towns in the region, has support from the city's Licensing Commission, and many Lawrence residents with whom I have spoken.
3. Fund the reinstatement of as many officers as possible. This can be accomplished using \$1.2 million in Local Aid Reversions slated for the City of Lawrence by October 31st. I wrote Mayor Lantigua imploring him to use these precious resources to improve safety in Lawrence.
4. Accelerate approval and distribution of \$750,000 in grants from the state Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS). The application for these funds is supported by the city's entire legislative delegation and would reinstate an additional 9 police.

We have a unique opportunity in the short- and medium-term to help take Lawrence in a new direction by increasing public safety personnel and restoring our police forces to levels that are adequate for a city of nearly 80,000 people.

Going forward, we must address the long-term issues that have led to Lawrence's recent public safety crises, and restore the city's financial viability. Taxpayers of the Commonwealth have a right to transparency and facilitating it for them is one of my top priorities.
