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**AFSCME** LOCAL 5 - AFL-CIO

## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **PURE MICHIGAN MEANS PURE DANGER FOR STATE PARK OFFICERS**

**TUESDAY, JULY 3, 2018, LANSING, MICHIGAN—A complaint was filed with the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA) on Friday, June 29, 2018, on behalf of the 320 State Park officers who are represented by the Michigan State Employees Association (MSEA).** Even though the Pure Michigan advertising campaign features idyllic scenes of Michigan beaches, sand dunes and sunsets, the reality for State Park Officers is Pure Danger--especially during the summer season and holidays such as the Fourth of July. State Park Officers have been called on to keep the peace during fights and riots in state parks which have resulted in arrests and injuries. Incidents have included gang-related activity, drug and alcohol abuse, disorderly conduct and a more than 300-person riot.

The situation has become so dire, that a comprehensive mailing was recently sent by MSEA to state Legislators--and to Gov. Rick Snyder--regarding the danger that State Park Officers are experiencing in Michigan's state Parks. There was virtually no response.

"Incidents that State Park Officers have had to deal with are increasing in frequency and becoming ever more dangerous for them and for their seasonal workers," said **MSEA President Ken Moore**. "Our State Park Officers are serving and protecting Michigan's citizens with insufficient training, improper tools, lack of equipment and inadequate backup. What is it going to take for our officials to do something about this escalating situation which has gotten worse every year?"

State Park Officers are commissioned Officers with powers and privileges bestowed upon them as a peace officer, but they are not issued a sidearm, Taser, soft body armor, or proper communications equipment. Yet they are expected to do the job of a typical city Police Officer.

"These safety issues not only affect our State Park Officers, but also the patrons of our state parks," said Moore. "All patrons of Michigan state parks should be assured of their safety as they enjoy the beauty of our great state. Furthermore, we are not going to just stand by and allow our State Park Officers to be threatened, abused and put in dangerous situations they are not equipped to deal with."

The Michigan State Employees Association (MSEA) was founded in 1950 and has over 4,500 members, representing primarily state employees in 17 departments, and power plant employees at Western Michigan University. MSEA is affiliated with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Local 5 of the AFL-CIO.

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