

Pennsylvania State Police Testimony  
Senate Committee on Law and Justice  
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Presented By:  
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Good afternoon, Chairman Pippy and members of the Committee. I am Lieutenant Colonel Tedescung L. Bandy, Deputy Commissioner of Operations for the Pennsylvania State Police. On behalf of the Commissioner, Colonel Frank E. Pawlowski, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding Senate Bill 984.

The proposed legislation would permit municipalities that do not currently have an organized police department to contract with the Pennsylvania State Police for the services of one or more state troopers. Troopers assigned to the contracting municipality would be over and above our statutory complement, but they would still be subject to all Departmental orders, regulations, and directives.

Naturally, we appreciate your desire to find a mechanism for funding additional state troopers to protect Pennsylvania's citizens. However, we are opposed to Senate Bill 984, which raises a number of unanswered questions.

Senate Bill 984 allows municipalities to contract for trooper services but specifies that the contract price "shall include only the labor and benefit costs of providing police protection." Does this mean the total contract price is limited to the actual salary and benefits of troopers assigned to the municipality or can it include a portion of the labor and benefit costs associated with providing the infrastructure necessary to support the contract troopers? For example, Senate Bill 984 specifies that contract troopers will be supervised by the commander of the field installation with jurisdiction over the contracting municipality; yet, the bill does not say whether a portion of the station commander's labor and benefit costs can be included in the contract.

Significantly, it will cost more than \$30,000 to train and equip each additional new trooper. It is unclear whether those costs can be factored into the contract price. If not, the

money will have to come from the General Fund and the Motor License Fund, further challenging the health of both funds.

The added costs do not stop there. Troopers in the field do not work in isolation; they receive essential support not only from the various levels of supervision in their direct chain of command but from our various offices and bureaus as well. Whether on patrol or performing other police duties, troopers routinely obtain critical information from the Commonwealth Law Enforcement Assistance Network and other databases in the Bureau of Records and Identification, the Pennsylvania Criminal Intelligence Center, and our Watch Center. Troop operations are supported by the Bureaus of Patrol, Information Technology, Communication and Information Services, Emergency and Special Operations, Forensic Services, Integrity and Professional Standards, and our legal office. Increasing the number of troopers in the field will necessarily place a greater strain on all of these resources, which are essential to providing citizens with comprehensive police services.

Presently, there are over 1,000 municipalities that rely solely on the State Police for coverage. Depending on how many municipalities choose to contract for troopers, it will be necessary to create and oversee a potentially large number of contracts. And what about With respect to the municipalities that choose not to contract for troopers, will they continue to receive State Police coverage at no additional cost? If so, what is the incentive for municipalities to pay at all? Finally, what will happen in municipalities that currently have police departments but can no longer afford to operate them? Senate Bill 984 does not authorize those municipalities to pay for any troopers even if they are willing to do so.

Fiscal issues aside, other questions remain. Senate Bill 984 does not address the criteria for determining how many troopers are necessary to effectively patrol a municipality at any

given time. The proposed legislation prohibits station commanders from removing a trooper from a contracting municipality during assigned hours except in cases of “extreme emergency,” without defining that term. The bill is silent as to how much input, if any, a municipality will have regarding when and where contract troopers are scheduled and deployed.

It has been long-standing State Police policy to equitably assign troopers to stations and patrol zones across the Commonwealth using a combination of the State Trooper Allocation Formula, or STAF, and the Problem Specific Policing program.

STAF is designed to equalize workloads, taking into account a variety of factors, such as the volume of calls for service, length of time spent at incidents, complexity of investigations, proactive versus reactive duties, as well as training time, days off, and personal leave. Using STAF, we are able to distribute troopers in a manner devoid of political or economic influence to make sure all of our citizens receive similar levels of service.

STAF is complemented by a program we call Problem Specific Policing, which is an incident analysis and police management tool using real-time data. Based on regional crime and patrol trends, field commanders are able to deploy resources in order to maximize effectiveness. The contract concept embodied in Senate Bill 984 runs counter to these principals and potentially pits the “haves” against the “have nots.” The bottom line is that troopers should be assigned based on need rather than how many troopers a municipality can – or will – pay for.

In conclusion, on behalf of Colonel Pawlowski and all of the men and women of the Pennsylvania State Police, I want to thank you again for the opportunity to address your committee. We appreciate the chance to participate in this important discussion, and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.