

Statement of Ted Leonard
Executive Director, Pennsylvania AAA Federation
To the Senate Transportation Committee
February 16, 2016

Chairmen and members of the Senate Transportation Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our views on the state Motor License Fund (MLF). My name is Ted Leonard. I am the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania AAA Federation which is the state association of the AAA clubs in Pennsylvania, encompassing over 3.1 million member-motorists.

AAA was founded in 1902 largely to ensure the growing motoring public had access to adequate highways and bridges. Recently, the AAA clubs in Pennsylvania strongly supported the additional highway and bridge funding in Act 89. AAA clubs in Pennsylvania erected billboards across the state, submitted OPEDS, and published many articles in their club periodicals demonstrating the need for additional funding, and encouraging public and legislative support for additional funding for highways and bridges.

The Pennsylvania Constitution requires motor fuel taxes and license and registration fees be used for maintenance and safety of our highways and bridges. While we strongly support the highway safety patrol activities of the Pennsylvania State Police, it appears the funding to do so has become disproportionate to their actual activities. Approximately, two-thirds of the State Police budget - \$758 million – is diverted from the MLF, and the amount diverted is growing at a faster rate than MLF revenue. At the present rate of increase, the diversion could equal \$1 Billion in the next 4-5 years. This is a significant loss of funding for our highways, bridges and local roads. Budgetary concerns are leading municipalities across the Commonwealth to dissolve their local police forces and turn to the State Police for coverage. This additional activity stretches the resources of the State Police with potentially further negative impact on the MLF.

We strongly support House Transportation Committee Chairman John Taylor's [House Resolution 622](#) which directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee (LBFC) to conduct a comprehensive review of the appropriate, justifiable and Constitutional level of Motor License

Fund support for the Pennsylvania State Police. However, identifying the justifiable level of funding from the Motor License Fund for the Pennsylvania State Police is simply the first step. We, as AAA, have said to anyone who would listen over the last decade-and-a-half that...If we are ever going to truly address this problem, we need to cap the amount diverted from the Motor License Fund, while maintaining the Pennsylvania State Police's budget through alternative funding sources. AAA strongly supports our State Police and would welcome the opportunity to participate in any study or committee that seeks to generate a bipartisan solution to finally address this funding problem. AAA stands at the ready – Let's get started.