

POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

of the NEW YORK STATE TROOPERS, INC.



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Remarks by NY State Troopers PBA President Thomas H. Mungeer on February 12, 2020 regarding the 2020-2021 Executive Budget

Members of the Legislature, thank you for allowing me to present important information on behalf of all New York State Troopers as well as the citizens of this state. My name is Thomas Mungeer, and I am honored to represent 7,000 active and retired uniformed State Troopers in my position as President of the New York State Troopers PBA, the labor union representing those dedicated public servants. This is my eleventh year addressing all of you and as in the past, the PBA will take a strong stance in advocating for the safety of our members.

Manpower - sworn members, the men and women who wear the gray uniform, patrol our highways, and respond to emergencies - is once again our top priority. We are thankful that Governor Andrew Cuomo and the Legislature have been responsive to our requests in the past but we must reaffirm our commitment to replenish our dwindling manpower levels. Fewer Troopers on the road will endanger not only the public, but also the brave and dedicated Troopers who put their lives on the line each and every day. Being a New York State Trooper is a difficult and dangerous job, as evidenced by the 24 line-of-duty deaths since 2010.

The biggest drain on our manpower, however, has been the additional resources necessary to comply with the recent changes made to the criminal justice system. Although other law enforcement agencies statewide are reporting an uptick in warrant cases due to the failure of arrestees returning to court for adjudication, it is too early to have definitive numbers on how the New York State Police is affected. Any increase in warrants will have a negative impact on the number of Troopers who are available to patrol the communities of the state. That being said, the implementation of the discovery laws absolutely do have an immense impact on the available patrols at any given time. In the past, an ordinary arrest for a charge such as for Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) normally took approximately one hour to process but now takes up to four hours to complete. That's a 300% increase in the amount of time that Troopers are now off the road completing administrative tasks rather than patrolling our highways, roadways and communities.

Other top priorities this year include the replacement of high-mileage patrol vehicles, the reinstatement of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program statewide and the addition of Troopers assigned to construction zones on state highways. Replacing high-mileage patrol vehicles is a constant process as the

Division of State Police attempts to replace patrol vehicles once they have been driven 125,000 miles. Reinstating the SRO program statewide will help Troopers make more community contacts as well as safeguard against threats targeting schools. The presence of Troopers in construction zones on state highways will act as not only a deterrent for reckless driving, but will also provide for a fast response time in case of an accident.

Finally, in anticipation of the legalization of marijuana, the PBA strongly urges the Legislature to allocate sufficient funds for the training of additional Drug Recognition Experts (DREs) and the replacement and training of approximately 40 marijuana scent-trained dogs.

The reason we became New York State Troopers in the first place was because we care about the safety of you, your friends and family, and the communities across the state. That's why I must speak out about the consequences of not having adequate manpower, training and proper equipment for sworn members of the New York State Police to properly do their jobs, especially in this era of the ever-present threat of domestic terrorism.