

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 January 30, 2018 regarding the 2018-2019 Executive Budget

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Members of the Legislature, thank you for allotting me time 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 6,000 active and retired Troopers and State Police Supervisors in my position as President of the New York State Troopers PBA, the labor union representing those dedicated public servants.

This is my ninth year addressing all of you, and this is the ninth year the PBA has taken a strong stance in advocating for the safety of our members.

While in previous years we have requested funding for equipment such as patrol rifles and ballistic vests, our priorities this year are focused on manpower - sworn members, the men and women who wear the gray uniform, patrol our highways, and respond to emergencies - and the purchase of new patrol vehicles. We are thankful that Governor Andrew Cuomo and the Legislature have been responsive to our requests in the past.

The duties of a New York State Trooper today are much different than the responsibilities of a Trooper 20 years ago. Troopers are increasingly on the front lines of terrorism and even natural disaster relief. You have probably heard the news reports about Troopers ushering citizens to safety in New York City after finding an improvised explosive device, and also seen footage of Troopers providing assistance to law enforcement in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico following devastating hurricanes.

Although there has been headway in the past year to replenish our dwindling manpower levels, we are still fighting to regain our footing with adequate staffing while dealing with the specter of attrition that looms ominously every year.

With that in mind, we are requesting funding for 500 additional Troopers in the form of two Academy classes of 250 recruits. While the Governor's budget proposal called for a slight increase in hiring, the positions mentioned were for specialized units that would not be connected to everyday patrol duties.

We are also requesting funds to purchase new patrol vehicles. Money authorized by the Legislature for vehicles in the past has helped ease the situation. However, replacing high-mileage patrol vehicles is a constant process. The Division of State Police attempts to replace patrol vehicles once they have been driven 125,000 miles. Recent figures show that 26% of our fleet exceeds the 125,000-mile threshold, including 17 cars that have more than 200,000 miles on their odometers.

Patrol vehicles are driven in severe conditions - including weather, speed, and different types of terrain - and the extremely high mileage on the vehicles adds another layer of adversity to an already difficult situation.

Being a New York State Trooper is a difficult and dangerous job, as evidenced by the 26 line-of-duty deaths we have incurred since 2006. 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 and safe patrol vehicles 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. We appreciate your support.