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POLICE BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION

of the NEW YORK STATE TROOPERS, INC.



120 State Street
Albany, New York 12207
Office: (518) 462-7448
Fax: (518) 462-0790
nystpba@nystpba.org

Remarks by NY State Troopers PBA President Thomas H. Mungeer on January 31, 2017 regarding the 2017-2018 Executive Budget

THOMAS H. MUNGEER
President

RICHARD M. AMEDURE, JR.
First Vice President

DANIEL F. SISTO
Second Vice President

JOHN P. MORETTI, JR.
Secretary & Troop A Delegate

CHARLES A. DI SANTO
Treasurer

ROGER L. RIUTTA
Troop B Delegate

ANDREW C. DAVIS
Troop C Delegate

DOMINICK PEDULLA
Troop D Delegate

GARY D. NUESSELE
Troop E Delegate/Sgt. at Arms

STEPHEN K. JOHNSTONE
Troop F Delegate

ERIC V. TERRAFERMA
Troop G & H Delegate

MAURICE E. COLEY
Troop K Delegate

PETER M. NUNZIATA
Troop L Delegate

WILLIAM M. GOURLAY
Troop T Delegate

JOSEPH R. DOMAGOLA
NCO West Delegate

MICHAEL R. COLLIER
NCO East Delegate

JOHN W. McCARTHY, JR.
Officers Delegate

FREDERICK W. SCHEIDT
Retiree Liaison

RICHARD E. MULVANEY
General Counsel

GORDON D. WARNOCK
Political Director

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

We live in uncertain times, and those who wish to harm Americans are finding ways to hurt us. With this in mind, we are asking for an increase in funding to further our efforts in the war on terror. These funds would be used to: add 1,000 Troopers to our manpower by the end of 2018, train Troopers in anti-terrorism initiatives and purchase needed equipment such as patrol rifles, ballistic vests and patrol vehicles.

Earlier this month, Americans endured another terror-related tragedy during a shooting at an airport in Fort Lauderdale that resulted in the killing of five people and the wounding of six others. Simply put, terrorists are finding ways to gain access to the general population and complete their deadly missions.

With our request for increased funding, we want to take a proactive approach to protecting our most vulnerable travel points of entry – airports, transportation hubs and border crossings – as well as valuable resources including nuclear and electrical power plants, and places of mass gatherings. We are appealing for these resources to supplement the enforcement efforts provided by local law enforcement across the state when requested.

We are thankful that Governor Andrew Cuomo and the Legislature have been responsive to our requests in the past. Last year, we explained the need for funds to purchase additional rifles, rifle plates and carriers for our Troopers.

Manpower is once again a priority. We are referring to manpower levels of sworn members, the men and women who wear the gray uniform, patrol our highways, and respond to emergencies. 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. If the number of Troopers continues to decrease, there will be serious public safety issues.

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 21 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 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. You must ask yourselves: what price am I willing to pay for the safety of my constituents?