

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 6, 2013 regarding the 2013-2014 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 fourth year addressing all of you, and this is the fourth year the PBA has taken a strong stance in advocating for the safety of our members in the form of manpower, patrol rifles and Tasers. 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. For example, historically the Superintendent of State Police has been able to deploy at least 500 Troopers to disasters but because of the present manpower levels, was only able to send 350 Troopers to Long Island in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. Luckily, Nassau and Suffolk counties have two of the largest police departments in the country, so this glaring deficiency wasn't readily apparent. If a disaster were to occur somewhere upstate this manpower deficiency would be more noticeable as there aren't the vast numbers of local police officers and deputies to draw from.

We are thankful that Governor Andrew Cuomo has allocated 330 new recruit Troopers in the proposed 2013 – 2014 Executive Budget. Added to the 340 hired since last summer, we are beginning to close the gap created by more than 230 yearly retirements. The shortfalls created by not having any Academy classes between 2009 – 2012 will still mean that we will be short 300 Troopers or nearly 10% of the uniformed force. You can see the proposal to add new recruit Troopers will just begin to bring our manpower levels back up. We are at a tipping point with attrition levels, and it is imperative that not only these new

recruit Troopers remain in the budget, but also those numbers should continue to be increased.

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 – since 2008, five members have been killed in the line of duty. That being said, with fewer Troopers patrolling larger areas without adequate backup it is imperative that we equip them with the proper tools to carry out their jobs and return safely to their families at the end of their shifts. Two items that can help are patrol rifles and Tasers. Having enough rifles to supply every patrol vehicle would ensure that our road Troopers would have a fighting chance against a heavily armed adversary in the future. With the ever-evolving criminal element, it is of the utmost importance that our Troopers are equipped with the latest tools of the trade, including Tasers, to protect the citizens of New York State and themselves.

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

Thank you for your time and consideration.