

Testimony of Joseph A. D'Amico
Superintendent of State Police
Before the Legislative Fiscal Committees
On the 2014-2015 Executive Budget
February 5, 2104

Thank you Chairman *DeFrancisco*, Chairman *Farrell* and distinguished members of the Committees for the opportunity to discuss with you Governor Cuomo's Budget for the Division of State Police. I am Joseph D'Amico, Superintendent of State Police.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Legislature for its past support of the New York State Police. Because of your support, the New York State Police continues to enjoy its well-deserved reputation as one of the best law enforcement agencies in the nation.

On April 11, 1917, Governor Whitman signed the Wells-Mills Bill into law under Chapter 161 of the Laws of 1917. The basic role of the State Police as established in the original law is essentially unchanged to this day:

"It shall be the duty of the State Police to prevent and detect crime and apprehend criminals. They shall also be subject to the call of the Governor and empowered to cooperate with any other department of the State or with local authorities."

The importance of this original charter is as significant now as it was back then.

Since its inception nearly a century ago, the State Police has consistently provided service through its core missions: to prevent and detect crime, apprehend criminals and to cooperate with any other agency whether federal, state or local authority. Our mission priorities include reducing the number of deaths, injuries and property damage caused by motor vehicle accidents through vehicle and traffic enforcement and education, reducing violent crime on a statewide basis, providing support to local law enforcement agencies and serving a crucial role in the State's counter-terrorism efforts working with federal, local and other state agencies to ensure the continued safety of the people of New York State.

New York is the safest large state in the nation, and the State Police remains committed to keeping New Yorkers safe in a way that is tough, smart and fair. We fully support the Governor's proposal for a new law to stop repeat drunk drivers by suspending or revoking their licenses and for youth texting and driving, we support the proposal for a new law doubling the suspension period for any person under 21 convicted of texting-while-driving. The State Police will support these and other laws to curb dangerous driving through targeted enforcement efforts consistent with our core mission of promoting highway safety.

The State Police also remains committed to continuing to reduce violence and crime through cooperative efforts working with federal, local and other state agencies. Working side by

side with partner agencies and enhancing their enforcement and investigative capabilities, particularly in our large cities, is the most effective way to be successful at crime reduction.

Accurate and timely information is at the core of today's effective policing, and up-to-date technology tools are needed to deliver that information efficiently. Over the next three years, the State will invest \$10 million in shared technology for State Police and local law enforcement. By making a single solution available to all law enforcement agencies, the State will increase crime-fighting capabilities, eliminate barriers to effective Public Safety information sharing, and support coordinated responses across jurisdictions. As local law enforcement agencies join the system over the next four years, savings to these participating agencies are expected to grow to \$12 million annually.

We will continue to look for additional efficiencies through our partnerships with other law enforcement agencies throughout the State and through coordination of government services where practical and possible.

An emerging area of concern in public safety at all levels, from federal agencies to local government, is Cyber Security as recognized by the New York State Cyber Security Initiative. The New York State Intelligence Center, led and managed by the Division of State Police, was established in August 2003 as an "all-crimes" fusion center responsible for gathering, analyzing and disseminating information and intelligence to a wide variety of state, local, territorial and tribal (SLTT) governments. This includes the growing number of cyber intrusion threats that occur on a regular basis. As part of the initiative, a new facility that brings together monitoring of both the cyber and physical aspects of critical infrastructure in New York State and provides the capability to receive, analyze and share classified intelligence information was stood up and is now active. The Center will include New York State Police, DHSES-Office of Counter Terrorism, Division of Military and Naval Affairs, and other state and local law enforcement partners, as well as federal agency partners.

The New York State Police Forensic Laboratory System provides services to a majority of the counties within the State. For instance, we perform over 60% of impaired driving toxicology criminal casework work in the State in furtherance of highway safety. Of those cases, approximately 50% are for agencies other than the State Police. The laboratory also provides certification of breath testing reference materials for every law enforcement agency in the State. The State Police Laboratory also serves as the sole data entry point in the State for the FBI Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). The success of DNA in the identification and exoneration of suspects in criminal investigations is well-documented. In the past year, the State Police Laboratory has met the increased demands for service in implementing the requirements of legislation to collect DNA samples for all crimes. This is a critical step to further this success and ensure that we provide the citizens of the State the best public safety. DNA helps prevent crime, exonerate the innocent and convict the guilty. During the last accreditation by The American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD)/Laboratory Accreditation Board (LAB) in 2013, the laboratory system identified improved efficiencies, received approval from ASCLD and made a transition from a system of four individual laboratories to that of a single lab system with satellite facilities. This change permits improved flexibility to move staff and scientific analyses to different sites within the system without the need for prior ASCLD/LAB

notification and approval. In addition, it allows the laboratory to make timely adjustments to conduct analyses at sites we deem appropriate to meet the needs of our clients.

The State Police is unique as the only law enforcement agency in New York State with the ability to deploy large numbers of professionally trained, sworn police officers anywhere in the State on short notice in response to an emergency or natural disaster. The State Police is also available for large-scale deployments to meet a particular, immediate need for law enforcement services in any community. The Governor has identified the experiences from disaster responses such as super storm Sandy, hurricane Irene and tropical storm Lee as opportunities for improvement in disaster preparedness and response readiness and we are active participants in this effort through our partnership with the Office of Emergency Management through dedicated staff resources.

My first and foremost priority continues to be the safety of the public and our Troopers who protect them. Toward that end, we will continue to provide our Troopers with the necessary equipment and other valuable resources to achieve the best levels of safety in the performance of their duty. Additional patrol rifles and electronic control devices (TASERS) have been deployed to our Troopers to provide an increased level of personal safety during the performance of their duties.

This past year an entrance examination for new Troopers was held for the first time in several years. We continue to conduct Academy classes so that adequate staffing levels are maintained to perform our core mission priorities. This has been done in conjunction with making reasonable and prudent staffing decisions to maintain levels of service while insuring the safety of our members. We continuously assess and evaluate our deployment to maximize provision of police services by prioritizing staffing levels of our Troopers on patrol. The Governor's Budget recognizes that in order to maintain necessary levels of quality service, there must be new recruits trained this year for the next generation of Troopers and we appreciate his support on this.

New Yorkers have come to expect service by a stable, well-deployed and adequately resourced State Police. I am proud to say that New Yorkers can be confident their expectations are being met. It is the integrity, knowledge, dedication and quality of our men and women that distinguishes the New York State Police. I am honored and privileged to be a part of this premier police agency and its great traditions.

I thank you for your support of the State Police and for this opportunity today to address you.