

# 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 5, 2014 regarding the 2014-2015 Executive Budget

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 fifth year addressing all of you, and this is the fifth 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.

We are thankful that Governor Andrew Cuomo and the Legislature have realized the need to resume hiring Troopers to begin to erase the shortfalls created by not having any Academy classes between 2009 and 2012. Unfortunately, despite hiring 506 Troopers in the last three years, we have lost 656 to retirements as well as 8 Troopers who have made the ultimate sacrifice during this time.

We are at a tipping point with attrition levels, and it is imperative that the State Police hire at least 300 new Troopers this year to offset an anticipated 250 retirements. We must start to move in a positive direction in terms of manpower to dig ourselves out of the proverbial hole created by the 3 ½-year freeze.

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 above mentioned line-of-duty deaths. That being said, with fewer Troopers patrolling larger areas without adequate backup it is imperative that we equip

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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?