
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 325 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY MENSCH, WAGNER, TEPLITZ, DINNIMAN, EICHELBERGER,
ARGALL, YAW, RAFFERTY, BARTOLOTTA, FOLMER, BREWSTER AND
VULAKOVICH, APRIL 20, 2016

REFERRED TO VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS,
APRIL 20, 2016

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging the Governor and the executive branch to develop a plan
2 to implement a solution for the Statewide emergency radio
3 communications system.

4 WHEREAS, The Office of Administration began a procurement
5 process for a Statewide emergency radio communications system in
6 1996; and

7 WHEREAS, The initial contract with a communication company in
8 1999 was for \$179 million to build the Statewide emergency radio
9 communications system, "PA-STARNet"; and

10 WHEREAS, The 1999 contract with the communication company had
11 an 18-month deployment schedule; and

12 WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania State Police did not fully
13 transition to the system until 2010 and maintains an aging, 30-
14 year-old, backup system due to reliability issues with PA-
15 STARNet; and

16 WHEREAS, Change orders, consultancy and radios and other
17 issues increased the total capital cost to approximately \$21

1 million annually in addition to an annual maintenance contract
2 valued at \$7 million, resulting in a total outlay to date by
3 this Commonwealth's taxpayers of nearly \$800 million; and

4 WHEREAS, After years of budget hearing testimony by State
5 agency personnel citing deficiencies and safety concerns for
6 users of PA-STARNet, as well as an independent consultant's
7 report that the OpenSky technology developed by the
8 communication company was end-of-life, it was proposed to move
9 PA-STARNet from the Office of Administration to the Pennsylvania
10 State Police in 2012; and

11 WHEREAS, On September 18, 2013, the Pennsylvania State Police
12 testified before the Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness
13 Committee of the House of Representatives that weaknesses in
14 reliability and coverage prevented PA-STARNet from being a true
15 public safety grade system; and

16 WHEREAS, On September 18, 2013, the Pennsylvania State Police
17 testified before the Veterans Affairs & Emergency Preparedness
18 Committee of the House of Representatives that it was working to
19 select a new vendor to transition the system from its current
20 platform to a P25 public safety grade platform; and

21 WHEREAS, Most recently PA-STARNet was proven unreliable and
22 ineffective in the search for the criminal who ambushed and
23 murdered one police officer and gravely injured another; and

24 WHEREAS, The system could not provide the fixes needed during
25 the manhunt to provide and extend radio coverage, and after-
26 action reports described the manhunt radio situation as the
27 worst-case scenario for PA-STARNet; and

28 WHEREAS, Continued delay of a solution to this problem puts
29 both law enforcement and the citizenry in imminent danger;
30 therefore be it

1 RESOLVED, That the Senate urge the Governor and the executive
2 branch to develop a plan to implement a solution for the
3 Statewide emergency radio communications system immediately and
4 to report to the General Assembly regarding the plan and its
5 implementation.