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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** All Members of the House of Representatives

**FROM:** Representative P. Michael Sturla, Chairman *P.M.S.*  
House Democratic Policy Committee

**DATE:** February 16, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Co-sponsorship – Reintroduction - **State Police Municipal Patrol Services Act (Former HB 1500)**  
**Memo 11**

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In the near future, I plan to reintroduce the State Police Municipal Patrol Services Act to address the inequities of state police funding and patrol. This legislation will incorporate many of the amendments proposed by both caucuses last session.

Approximately half of the Pennsylvania State Police budget (\$450 million) goes to providing routine state police coverage on a full-time or part-time basis to those municipalities with either no local police force or a part-time local police force. In terms of statistics, this means that the Pennsylvania State Police currently provides primary routine police coverage to only 21% of the state's population, while locally-funded full time police departments cover 72% of the population. The remaining 7% of the population are covered by a part-time local police force and the Pennsylvania State Police.

In an effort to fund the important work of the Pennsylvania State Police, around \$450 million is transferred from the Motor License Fund each year. Of this money, the Pennsylvania Constitution specifically states that the money must be used only for "construction, reconstruction, maintenance and repair of and safety on public highways and bridges." The revenues contained in the Motor License Fund is our state's main source of money used to erect new bridges, support mass transit, and build new roads in every community. At a time when our Commonwealth is experiencing a transportation funding crisis and our roads and bridges are crumbling, we must scrutinize the effectiveness of every tax dollar spent. An infusion of new money for road and bridge repair will put thousands of Pennsylvanians back to work in family sustaining jobs.

It is true that all Pennsylvania residents help pay for the Pennsylvania State Police through state taxes, but 79% of the population is paying for the Pennsylvania State Police patrols and their own local police department. This is double taxation and unfair to a majority of our constituents. Conversely, 21% of the population is getting 100% of the patrols and only paying 21% of the cost.

My legislation is not an attempt to simply generate revenue. My goal is to efficiently spend each tax dollar, simultaneously create hundreds of millions of dollars for new roads and bridges, put Pennsylvanians to work, and provide an incentive for local municipalities to pay for their police protection like the majority of Pennsylvanians do by creating their own police force, or joining with surrounding municipalities and instituting a regional police department. Local and regional police forces are the best and quickest way to protect our families and keep our streets safe. Municipalities

should work in conjunction with the Pennsylvania State Police - not rely on them to provide primary protection for their residents.

The State Police Municipal Patrol Services Act will set a fee structure for municipalities to pay for Pennsylvania State Police routine patrol services provided in their municipalities. If a municipality solely relies on the Pennsylvania State Police for patrol services, my bill would assess a yearly \$156 per capita fee (\$3/week), which will be billed directly to the municipality and not the resident. If a municipality has a part time local police force and relies on the Pennsylvania State Police for the rest of their coverage, a yearly \$52 per capita fee (equal to the current local services tax levy) will be sent to the municipality. Any municipality opting to implement their own local police force or join their neighboring municipalities and create a regional police force will no longer have to pay a fee.

My bill would also create a \$20 million fund for the Pennsylvania State Police to use for new cadet training. It is estimated that approximately 150 troopers will retire in the upcoming year and this number will double within the next few years. The bill would also create another \$20 million to help pay the cost of those communities choosing to form a regional police department.

I believe it is imperative that we address this issue now since several dozen municipalities have already disbanded their local police departments in recent years to reduce costs. However, their actions have come at the expense of all taxpayers. One newspaper referred to these municipalities as "municipal welfare queens." The Pennsylvania State Police should not become a bailout center for communities who do not want to provide their residents with the protection of a local police force. If all communities that currently have their own police departments decided to disband them, the state would have to spend an additional \$1.5 billion each year.

Attached to this co-sponsorship memo, I have included a listing of the percentage of the population in each House legislative district covered by full-time PSP services, part-time PSP services, and full-time local police services.

**If you are interested in co-sponsoring this important legislation, please contact Michelle Bohnke by email ([mbohnke@pahouse.net](mailto:mbohnke@pahouse.net)) or phone at 787-3555.**