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**House of Representatives**  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
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PA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS,  
TREASURER

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** All Members of the House of Representatives  
**From:** Representative Harold James  
**Date:** August 16, 2012  
**Subject:** **Sheriffs' Legislation**

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In the near future, I will be introducing legislation that will modernize the Office of Sheriff by granting sheriff's the ability to enforce the laws of the Commonwealth and establishing a sheriff's and deputy sheriff's training program under the Municipal Police Officer's Education and Training Commission.

Many states, including New Jersey, grant county sheriffs the authority to enforce state laws in addition to acting as county officers. The added layer of law enforcement allows many states to ensure public safety and the enforcement of laws on a larger jurisdictional basis. In Pennsylvania, I believe there is a need for additional law enforcement in municipalities that rely solely on the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) for service. Reliance on the PSP in these municipalities has forced the PSP to begin training and hiring additional state troopers at a substantial cost. Providing county sheriffs and their deputies with the proper training and the ability to enforce the laws of the Commonwealth will fulfill the need for law enforcement in those municipalities. In addition, it will help contain the soaring costs associated with providing law enforcement to counties who rely on the PSP as their primary law enforcement agency.

Previously, similar legislation was sponsored by former Representative Robert Belfanti. My revised version has been updated to include the City of Philadelphia.

There are over 2,000 highly trained deputy sheriffs who are prepared to protect our communities from crimes and drugs. It would be a shame to waste such a valuable resource that could help make our communities safer. I plan to introduce this legislation by August 27<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to co-sponsor this important legislation, please contact Debbie Wegert in my Harrisburg office at 717-773-1792 or at [DWegert@pahouse.net](mailto:DWegert@pahouse.net).