

Good Afternoon Ladies and Gentleman,

My Name is Robert H. Blee Jr. and I am the Chief of Police of the Mahoning Township Police Department.

I have been asked to give testimony on behalf of House Bill 2585.

I have been a Police Officer in Montour County for the past 23 years For the Mahoning Township Police Department. In those 23 years I worked hand in hand with the Montour County Sheriff's Office. First under Now retired Sheriff Fred R. Shepperson and Now Sheriff Ray C. Geringer and their Deputies. The Montour County Sheriff's Office has been a valuable asset to the Drug Task Force, first the SUN task force which was comprised of Snyder, Union, Northumberland and Montour Counties and now the Northumberland and Montour County Drug Task Force. I have personally worked numerous cases with the members of the Montour County Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Geringer and his Deputies are a well trained staff.. Sheriff Geringer is always sending his Deputies to schools to be highly trained and efficient at their duties as a Law Enforcement Officer.

It is hard for me to understand why this is such an issue, when you travel across this GREAT Country of the United States of America I see Sheriff's and their Deputies on routine patrol just like the members on my Police Department. These Sheriff's and their Deputies from other States are doing Traffic enforcement, answering Domestic disturbance calls, lost children calls and the list could go on and on of what a Law Enforcement Officer does through out their day on the street.

I have read that many organizations are afraid of what might happen if the Sheriff gets this power, they are saying the Sheriff is going to take over Police Departments, I do not see how this could happen and there is a part of the Bill that states that would not be allowed.

There are a couple points of the Bill that I am not in favor of and one of those is the fact that an elected Sheriff has their **first term** to complete their training. I feel the elected Sheriff should have to complete their training within their **first year** of being sworn in as the Sheriff.

The Bill is unclear as to how they will handle the training requirements of the current Deputies to bring them up to speed to be able to enforce the laws of the State they are lobbying to enforce.

The other point of the bill that I do not agree with and do not support is the section that spells out the primary jurisdiction. The bill reads that the Sheriff shall have primary jurisdiction of all courthouses of the county and all other county owned or leased buildings, properties and facilities including properties owned or leased by county agencies and, as such shall enforce good order in county courthouses, or other grounds and buildings owned or leased by the county or **WITHIN 500 FEET** of county-owned or

leased property and upon the **SIDEWALKS,ROADS,STREETS AND PARKING AREAS WITHIN SUCH AREA.** In Mahoning Township for example this would mean they would be responsible for just about all of Woodbine Lane. Including part of Rt 11. In Danville Borough they would be responsible for a rather large area of the Mill, Market and Front Streets.

If these Points would be corrected I would support this bill 100%. The Sheriff's Office having the power to act would be beneficial to all the Residents, as well as other law enforcement agencies of the State of Pennsylvania. This should be the Main Mission of both the Sheriff's and Politicians of the State.

Thank you for your interest in this matter and coming to this Public Hearing.