

**MUNICIPAL AND REGIONAL POLICE USE OF RADAR FOR SPEED
ENFORCEMENT**

STATEMENT TO HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

APRIL 4, 2018



PRESENTED BY:

CHIEF STEVEN R. JUNKIN

HAMPDEN TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

ON BEHALF OF THE PENNSYLVANIA CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION

House members, staff, fellow witnesses, and concerned citizens, my name is Chief Steven Junkin of the Hampden Township Police Department in Cumberland County and I wish to express our sincere appreciation for the opportunity to provide input at today's important hearing. I speak today as a police chief, a member of the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, a retired member of the Pennsylvania State Police and a sworn and certified municipal police officer. As you know, the chief's association represents over 1,000 police leaders in Pennsylvania and is the informed and respected voice of professional law enforcement in the Commonwealth. I feel that my appearance today represents not only the chiefs, but the police officers that faithfully perform the many tasks that we demand of them 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Prior to joining the Hampden Township Police Department in 2014, I was a member of Pennsylvania State Police for more than 25 years; retiring at the rank of Captain. Throughout my career as a State Trooper, I was trained and utilized RADAR at various station assignments throughout the Commonwealth. In my roles as a Patrol Trooper, Patrol Supervisor, Station Commander and Troop Commander, I understood and took full advantage of RADAR as an effective, reliable and versatile tool in the Department's mission to enhance traffic safety in the communities I served with the main emphasis being in reducing speed related crashes, injuries and fatalities. From 2006-2008, I was assigned to the PSP's Bureau of Patrol and designated as the Commander of the Patrol Services Division, which oversees the acquisition, testing and policy regarding the Department's use of radar.

I am not here today seeking authorization to employ a new, untested, type of technology with unproven reliability or results. RADAR has been authorized and in use in the Commonwealth for more than fifty years by the state police. Over those five decades, the versatility and reliability of RADAR has been well documented and proven as a tool for providing modern day technology in addressing the very real issue of traffic safety. Reducing highway crashes, injuries and fatalities is the mission of every sworn police officer and Trooper in the Commonwealth. It's a tool that I firmly believe in, one that I've personally utilized but a tool that I am currently prohibited from employing for my community because of a well-known provision in the statute that prohibits the use of RADAR by municipal police officers. As you and members of the Committee fully know, Pennsylvania is the only state in the union that does not permit the use of RADAR by municipal police agencies of any type. When the prohibition was placed in the law more than fifty years ago, the state police had a much broader reach across the Commonwealth, municipal police officers weren't trained and certified annually by the Municipal Police Officers Education and Training Commission as they are today, and the problems associated with traffic safety weren't as wide spread as what all of our communities face now. Today, the true differences between the training, experience and missions of the state police and municipal departments are almost indistinguishable, especially in the realm of traffic safety.

At a time when law enforcement agencies are trying to be as effective and efficient as possible, we're stymied by an archaic provision of the law which seems to establish two tiers of communities. Those that have state police coverage have the ability to tap into

and use the most effective tools in addressing a safety concern while those communities that have invested their resources in having their own police department do not have access to those tools. As the chief executive of a municipal police agency and former state police commander who is often asked why municipal police don't have access to RADAR, I am hard pressed to state any reasonable, viable justification for not providing the use of RADAR to all communities in the Commonwealth. The municipal police officers and fellow Chiefs I've known over the past 29 years are as devoted and as dedicated to their communities as any member of the Pennsylvania State Police. Their integrity is not in question, their motivations are true and the people they serve deserve to have the equal protections under the law as other communities in the state.

I believe the Commonwealth's public policy makers and law enforcement professionals need to come together and provide access to all available resources to enhance public safety. Effective training, sound policy and adherence to the law will diffuse any age-old apprehensions or concerns and bring the Commonwealth into line with the standard operating practices of law enforcement across North America.

I want to thank you for providing me this opportunity and would be happy to answer any question you may have.