



New York State Police

Investigators Association



I.U.P.A.-Local 4 AFL-CIO

NEW YORK STATE POLICE INVESTIGATORS ASSOCIATION (NYSPIA) 2019-2020 Public Protection Hearing Testimony

Good afternoon Senate and Assembly members.

My name is Christopher M. Quick, and I am an Investigator with the New York State Police. I am the elected President of the New York State Police investigators Association (NYSPIA) which represents approximately 1200 State Police Senior Investigators and Investigators who are located strategically throughout New York State. Our members are assigned to a unit called the Bureau of Criminal Investigations, more commonly simplified as the BCI. The members of this unit are assigned to stations or special details which investigate the most serious crimes committed in our communities. These crimes include, but are not limited to: larcenies, robberies, burglaries, identity theft, sex crimes, and homicides.

We also deal with the most sensitive assignments including counterterrorism, forensic investigations, narcotics, auto theft, dignitary protection, special investigations, gaming, and computer crimes.

The State Police BCI unit is completely comprised of members who were originally uniformed New York State Troopers. Those Troopers were selected from an incredibly large pool of candidates and were chosen after their superior performance in the selection process. We are even more proud of the fact that our BCI membership comes directly from the best Troopers in the state.

The New York State Police is at a crucial juncture in its history as the policies and laws of New York State appear poised for change. We need to be prepared for these changes in order to continue our history of high-quality law enforcement on behalf of the citizens of New York State.

Our highest priority has been, and continues to be, the replacement of retiring members within our ranks. Equipment, policies, and procedures are ineffective without the members who are capable to implement them. We applaud the Governor's office for proposing a new academy class of New York State Troopers in the upcoming budget. We also appreciate the consistent support of the NYS legislature in agreeing with these proposals in past years. We are hopeful that the same decisions will be made this year. By doing so, the Division of State Police will have the ability to fill our BCI ranks as these new Troopers assume their duties.

The safety of our members is always of the utmost importance. BCI members are not issued uniforms for the completion of their duties. They operate typically in suits unless on special details or search missions. In many cases this is the most appropriate attire for their assignment. However, that is not always the case and it can jeopardize safety.



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One of the most compelling examples of a safety concern would be related to searches for dangerous criminals. Our members were tasked with searching for two convicted murderers back in 2015. These felons had escaped from the Clinton Correctional facility. We are all thoroughly aware of this highly publicized incident and the danger that it brought to the area until they were located. In addition to having to search for such dangerous people, the BCI members faced a second threat. They were not easily identifiable in the community. Unlike our uniformed colleagues, our membership was tasked with searching the woods, barns, and streams in their own attire. They could easily have been mis-identified by an area resident as a threat to them or their family as these police officers emerged from the woods. In addition, residents would be hesitant to approach an unidentified man to share information if they were unsure if he was the police or the escapee. In cases such as these, the police attire should be recognizable and proper for the assignment. We respectfully request appropriations to achieve that goal. We believe that these members should be issued a Class "C" uniform consisting of a pair of boots, pants, and 2 polo type shirts. The safety of our membership, and the simultaneous achieving of peace of mind by the citizens of New York State during these stressful events, overwhelmingly justify the expense for this minor equipment addition.

The aging automobile fleet of the New York State Police has been discussed in prior budget testimonies. I am happy to report that this issue has seen progress thanks to the legislature's commitment to addressing the problem. The appropriations from prior years have helped in targeting the highest mileage vehicles. We sincerely hope to maintain that trend by continuing to replace our fleet in the coming years. Our vehicles are not only mobile office where we conduct interviews of victims and suspects, but they are also one of the most valuable tools and getting us to the locations where our help is direly needed. Our confidence that the vehicle is safe and adequate for these challenges is of the utmost importance.

Additionally, we would hope that the legislature would agree that a more diverse line of vehicles be available to our members assigned to sensitive undercover work. As the criminal element within our society learns of the types of vehicles being used for surveillance by law enforcement, our effectiveness diminishes. The ability to vary the make and model of vehicles used during these very dangerous and sensitive investigations would be an incredibly valuable tool as well as a smart investment by our state. It would be foolish to spend time and money to commence an investigation which may ultimately fall to pieces due to the inability of our membership to move undetected by the suspects.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to bring these important issues to your attention on behalf of my membership. We are confident that you will share the same concerns that we hold today while making decisions related to the NYS Budget.