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# **2021 Joint Legislative Environmental Conservation Hearing Testimony**

**Submitted on behalf of the  
Police Benevolent Association  
of New York State**

**By: Ryan Law, President**

**State Job Title: NYS University Police Officer  
State Job Location: SUNY New Paltz**

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Testimony by: Ryan Law  
NYS University Police Officer

Testimony before: 2021 Joint Legislative Hearing Committee  
on Higher Education

Date: February 4, 2020

### **Introduction**

Good evening respected members of the joint committee. My name is Ryan Law. I am the President of the PBA of NYS and I currently serve as a University Police Officer with SUNY New Paltz.

My testimony today will focus on the roles of University Police Officers and the other units within our union during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 570 statewide University Police Officers have been critical to the security of the vaccination sites that are located on SUNY campuses. Their only request is to be treated fairly and on par with other law enforcement units within New York State.

In this regard, I am calling upon the Legislature to immediately implement the Governor's Program Bill #1 of 2021 which is the result of a March 2020 binding arbitration award that our union and the Governor's Office of Employer Relations agreed too. It is critical for the Legislature to understand the members of our union are still being paid by 2014 compensation levels. We are the only public union that has gone 7+ years without a contract.

I have spoken to members of our union who have been employed by the State of New York for over 20 years and they recall only two limited time periods when they were current with the State on a collective bargaining agreement. We are a small union who is easily overlooked. However, the men and women of our union have been on the front lines of the COVID-19 response since day one of the pandemic. We have had multiple union members test positive and go home each night wondering if they will further expose their loved ones and family members. When combined with the basic fact that we are some of the lowest compensated law enforcement units in the State, we do not think it is too much to ask of the Legislature to bring our compensation to 2018 levels. This is still 3 years behind other public employee unions who have forgone contractually negotiated raises for 2020 and 2021. Our union is in a much different situation. We are asking the Legislature to enact our pay bill which provides us with retroactive benefits and salary adjustments for years 2015-2018.

We are now well into the budget process and we ask the Legislature to enact the Governor's Program Bill #1 of 2021 as either a standalone bill or as part of the budget due April 1, 2021. Seven years is too long a time for these public servants to wait.

We are honored to protect New York's resources and the public. We continue assisting with the State's COVID response in a variety of different ways which puts our lives and our health on the line.

We are not asking for the 2020 raises you held for other state employees. By releasing this pay bill our members will be caught up to 2018 salaries, which is still 3 years behind 2021.

In conclusion, thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify before you today. We have met with many of you to explain these critical issues. We know you all believe that the people of New York State deserve the very best to fight this pandemic and protect our state lands. Today we are asking for your help. Please provide our union with fair and decent compensation levels by voting upon Governor Program Bill #1 of 2021.

**THANK YOU**