

Good Afternoon, Senator Harp and Representative Geragosian, and Distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Erik Trotter, and I am a Resident Trooper in the Town of Brooklyn. I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today. I am here to speak in **OPPOSITION** of Section 29-5 of the General Statutes contained within:

GOVERNOR'S BILL NO. # 6363

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECCOMENDATIONS CONCERNING GENERAL GOVERNMENT, CONSERVATION, DEVELOPMENT, REGULATION, PROTECTION, JUDICIAL AND CORRECTIONS.

There's a huge difference between a patrol trooper and a resident trooper. A patrol trooper usually has 4 or 5 towns of responsibility consisting of several hundred square miles or a long stretch of highway to patrol. As a result, a patrol trooper has very little time to spend with the public.

As a resident trooper, I'm responsible for just one town; therefore I can focus my attention on a small area and address issues that are important to the citizens of that town. Resident troopers are the liaisons between the town government, the barracks commander and the public. We are the local police force. In addition to enforcing the law, we attend town meetings and organize youth programs to include bicycle safety, child identification kits and teach the DARE program. All of these programs help us to develop a rapport with the town officials and citizens. The public frequently calls and asks for either myself or my partner because they feel more comfortable talking with someone they know as opposed to the random patrol trooper that may otherwise respond.

The rapport that we have built over the years has paid dividends. In my town, Brooklyn, between December 1st, 2008 and February 28th 2009, the resident troopers initiated a narcotics investigation, which resulted in the seizure of over 2 ½ kilos of cocaine. We have solved ten burglaries in Brooklyn and several other adjoining towns. We have seized five stolen firearms taken in burglaries in Rhode Island. In total, we have recovered over \$14,000 worth of stolen property and returned it to their rightful owners. This is in addition to the regular patrol duties we perform. All of these cases were possible because of the intimate familiarity we have with the town and its citizens.

We all know these are very difficult times and sadly if the state were to increase the town's cost burden for the resident trooper program to 100%, I fear some small towns would be unable to shoulder the additional financial burden. This would destroy all the hard work we have done to keep our streets safe.

In closing, I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today, and I am available to answer any questions you may have.

TFC Erik Trotter