

Good afternoon, Chairman Geragosian, Chairwoman Harp, and Distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Steven Rief, and I am President of the Connecticut State Police Union. I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today. I am here to speak in **OPPOSITION** of:

**PROPOSED BILL NO. 6363**  
***AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING  
GENERAL GOVERNMENT, CONSERVATION, DEVELOPMENT, REGULATION, PROTECTION,  
JUDICIAL AND CORRECTIONS***

I would like to start my testimony by stating that I am a Connecticut State Trooper. I have served the state in this capacity for nearly 20 years. As Union President I represent approximately 1160 State Troopers, Sergeants and Master Sergeants.

The Connecticut State Police provide primary law enforcement services in 81 of the State's 169 cities and towns. 58 towns contract with the State Police and the State for the Resident Trooper Program. The Connecticut State Police Resident Trooper Program has been in existence for 62 years, and has served as a national model for other States. This program provides an additional and necessary law enforcement presence in those towns by having a Trooper dedicated to the law enforcement needs of the town (in addition to the local State Police Barracks providing 24 hour daily coverage). The Resident Troopers oversee the town's day to day police operations. The program provides community policing in towns that cannot afford to have their own autonomous police department. And at a time when talk of regionalizing police services is at the forefront, regional policing is a core mission of the Connecticut State Police. The Connecticut State Police and its Resident Trooper Program provides the best and fiscally responsible policing initiatives in Connecticut. In a cost vs. benefits analysis, the benefits far outweigh the costs of the program.

Contained in Governor Rell's biennial budget are changes in funding for Resident State Troopers. Currently, towns pay 70% of the costs for each Resident Trooper, while the State pays the remaining 30% of the cost for the Trooper. Governor Rell has proposed to shift the costs for funding Resident Troopers to 85% for towns in FY2010, and 100% for towns in FY2011. The Governor's proposal has a projected savings of approximately \$6 million in the next two year budget. The reality is that this measure will actually cost the state money as towns will no longer contract for a Resident Trooper, thereby leaving the State to pay for 100% of the cost for that same Trooper (of which 70% is now paid by the specific town).

This proposal is *irresponsible* and will *jeopardize public safety* in our State. It will change the face of law enforcement in Connecticut, and will end up costing the State and our Communities in which we live much more. Towns will be forced between choosing the Resident Trooper Program, or comprising public safety in order to pay for other town services. Tax payers will face increased property taxes. Cutting state services, in particular those that provide for the safety of the citizens and communities in which we live and work, is exactly the wrong thing to do at any time. The state is experiencing severe budget shortfalls in billions of dollars, but cutting public safety services will only magnify the problem while creating new ones. It is the State's obligation, especially in a State without county government, to maintain the mission of the State Police and the Resident State Trooper Program by assisting these towns with their law enforcement needs. I urge you to prevent these changes in funding.

Today, I am joined by a number of Connecticut State Troopers, including many who are Resident Troopers. You will hear from them, and from many first selectmen from Connecticut's cities and towns, on how valuable the services of the Resident Troopers are to policing in their towns and keeping their communities safe. I want to thank this committee for your consideration on this important issue and would be happy to answer any questions.

March 27, 2009

CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE UNION  
Steven Rief, President