

State Police Resident Trooper Funding

Talking Points:

- 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 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 State presently has 118 Resident Troopers statewide. 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. This provides for more effective and efficient communication with town officials and their residents. Community based programs offered in Resident Trooper Towns include, for example: neighborhood watch, DARE, firearms safety, explorer programs, and bicycle patrol.
- Having Resident Troopers in towns which are patrolled by the State Police provide for more effective police services while also augmenting the patrol strength at barracks statewide. It reduces State Police response times for calls for service. It provides for greater visibility of State Troopers in our communities and better statewide coverage for State Police while reducing the cost to the state.
- The Resident State Trooper Program is regionalizing police services, and is a core mission of the Connecticut State Police. The 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.
- 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 should be 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.