

OLR BILL ANALYSIS

SB 32 (LCO 498)

AN ACT CONCERNING STATE POLICE STAFFING.

SUMMARY:

This bill eliminates a requirement for the Division of State Police to have at least 1,248 sworn police officers on staff and instead requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection commissioner to appoint the number necessary to perform division operations. Biennially, by September 15 in even-numbered years, the bill requires the commissioner to provide a report to the Public Safety Committee on sworn police officer staffing needs for the biennium beginning the following July 1. It eliminates the commissioner's duty to report annually to the appropriations and public safety committees on personnel projections for the force and inform them when it is necessary to authorize a trooper trainee class.

The bill also eliminates the cap on the state police volunteer auxiliary force, which, under current law, cannot exceed twice the number of state police officers. By law, the commissioner, as he deems necessary, may appoint and organize the volunteers to perform emergency services and augment the force.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

State Police Staffing

On January 11, 2012, a Superior Court judge ruled that the law requiring the Department of Public Safety commissioner (now the DESPP commissioner) to appoint and maintain a minimum of 1,248 state troopers is mandatory.

The judge, after reviewing the staffing statute and analyzing its history, acknowledged that the language is "not clear and unambiguous," but the most reasonable reading indicates that it is mandatory. The case is on appeal.