

MEMORANDUM

From: [Senator Jay Costa](#)

To: All Senate members

Subject: Police Training by the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission

In the wake of tragic officer-involved shootings across the commonwealth, and the nation, I am developing and will be introducing legislation to address these situations. I believe it is important that the General Assembly develop and enact legislation that provides improved training for police to know when to use force, particularly deadly force.

Additionally, it is important that our police receive additional training to promote better relations with the communities they police. Finally, it is important to make available enhanced mental health services to our police and community members. To this end, I am proposing legislation to do the following:

- Create specialized units to respond to crisis situations, including officer-involved shootings, to provide immediate access to mental health counseling for police and community members;
- Develop a statewide database to permit transparency in the hiring of police officers; the database will include any disciplinary actions, misconduct or discriminatory policing complaints lodged against law enforcement personnel;
- Require MPOETC to develop a uniform policy on the use of force and deadly force by police officers and direct municipalities that lack such policies to adopt and post the MPOETC uniform policy and require annual updates and training for police officers;
- Create a bipartisan legislative caucus on cultural awareness in policing that can study police activities and make recommendations on improving community police relationships;
- Improve Municipal Police Officer Training to include the following:
 - Enhanced classroom and field training on cultural awareness for police recruits and during police training;
 - Direct in the training and recertification curriculum, psychological counseling for police officers who may be suffering from PTSD or other similar issues. MPOETC would develop a statewide standard.

Please join me in co-sponsoring this important legislation.

MEMORANDUM

From: [Senator Jay Costa](#)

To: All Senate members

Subject: Law Enforcement Oversight Board

In the near future, I will be introducing legislation that will establish a professional oversight board for law enforcement officers, similar to other licensure and certification boards currently under the jurisdiction of the Department of State.

The board will be responsible for providing certification to law enforcement officers, preparing and administering exams for certification, offering continuing education, and disciplining bad actors.

The board exams will be required to focus on knowledge of the law and criminal procedures, but also have a special emphasis on de-escalation techniques and community safety.

Once a certificate is issued, the board will have the authority to investigate complaints, take disciplinary action, including suspending, revoking, and reinstating a certificate, and to design and provide for continuing education.

In addition to creating a system of oversight, the legislation will provide professional protection from anyone acting as a law enforcement officer without credentials.

The Board will consist of 14 members spanning the law enforcement profession including the Attorney General's Office, the Chiefs of Police Association, the District Attorneys Association, and active police officers.

Please join me in co-sponsoring this legislation.

MEMORANDUM

From: [Senator Jay Costa](#)

To: All Senate members

Subject: Police Community Relations and Incident Response Team

In the near future I will be introducing legislation that will create a Community Relations and Incident Response Team within the Office of the Attorney General.

The Community Relations and Incident Response Team will have two related responsibilities:

- 1) To provide assistance in resolving disputes, disagreements, or difficulties as a result of conflicts between communities and law enforcement agencies; and
- 2) To respond to police shootings to better manage the after effects of incidents and to provide resources to family and communities that are affected.

The office will be available to communities upon request or upon its own recognition that a community needs intervention. The office will have to use dispute resolution, de-escalation, risk assessment, and trauma informed education to help communities and law enforcement improve relations.

Please join me in cosponsoring this legislation.

MEMORANDUM

Posted: July 27, 2018 03:54 PM
From: [Senator Sharif Street](#)
To: All Senate members
Subject: Background Checks for Hiring of Law Enforcement Officials

In the near future, I will introduce legislation to amend Title 44 (Law and Justice) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, to create a record keeping and vetting process for law enforcement officers who are separated from service.

Police officers are guardians of our neighborhoods, and they are the first line of defense when it comes to keeping our constituents safe. Good police work makes a neighborhood safer and builds an indispensable bond between police officers and the communities they represent, but bad police work alienates communities, erodes their trust of authority, and allows bad cops to become their cultural norm, rather than the exception.

In the wake of countless instances of police brutality throughout the country and our commonwealth, specifically the case of Antwon Rose, this legislation is very important. Mr. Rose was killed by an officer who had been separated from a law enforcement agency but was rehired in another municipality without necessary vetting.

In many other industries there are required record keeping and vetting processes in place to protect citizens. To protect Pennsylvania's children, there are public databases of the misconduct of teachers, the status and date received of their licenses, and other relevant information. This same protection should be given to all the citizens who interact with our law enforcement officials.

If enacted, this bill will create a state database housed in the Attorney General's office that would create a record of separations of service by all local and statewide law enforcement agencies. The new hiring agency will have access to this record, and the hiring of the applicant will be contingent upon the viewing of this record. This record will not be public knowledge and is exempt from Right to Know laws, but if the municipality decides to hire an officer despite a record that contains allegations, complaints, investigations, or criminal charges concerning excessive force, theft, harassment, discrimination, sexual abuse, or sexual misconduct, then they must release a public notice of the hiring, along with a rationale and reasoning for their hiring, which will be available via a Right to Know request.

The bar for those who are authorized to use lethal force must be significant enough to ensure a high standard of safety and public accountability to those they serve. This legislation will take steps to ensure we have appropriate and qualified police representation in our communities.

Please join me in co-sponsoring this legislation.

MEMORANDUM

From: [Senator Jim Brewster](#)

To: All Senate members

Subject: Law Enforcement Regionalization Grant Program

In the near future, I will be introducing legislation that will provide for a law enforcement regionalization grant program.

Many communities are forced to operate with part time officers, who themselves must work multiple jobs to make ends meet. One measure that can be taken to overcome this is to provide incentives for departments to merge or consolidate on a regional or countywide basis.

My legislation would provide a grant incentive program to help with planning, facility decisions, equipment requirements, and operating costs associated with regionalization. This will provide a broader scale for hiring police at better wages, increase department access to minority communities for recruitment, and improve professionalization of officers.

In addition to helping ease the costs associated with regionalization the legislation will also help with training and man-power problems that are often related to community relations issues.

Please join me in co-sponsoring this legislation.

MEMORANDUM

Posted: December 2, 2016 11:20 AM
From: [Senator Art Haywood](#)
To: All Senate members
Subject: Special Prosecutor Legislation

Our criminal justice system is meant to be impartial and for prosecutors to discharge their duties free of personal or professional conflicts. However, recent events in Missouri and New York have shown that in certain circumstances, there is the appearance of conflict that can lead the public to believe that justice is not being dispensed fairly.

I plan on reintroducing SB 400 from the 2015-16 session, which would take review and prosecution of deadly force incident at the hand of police officers out of the jurisdiction of the local district attorney and put it in the hands of a special prosecutor.

My bill would require the Attorney General to appoint a special prosecutor whenever there is a deadly force incident and a police officer is involved. The special prosecutor would serve as an impartial prosecutor and remove the perceived conflict a district attorney might have prosecuting a local police officer.

My bill is not meant to punish an officer for discharging his or her duties. It is simply meant to provide neutral review of a case when an individual dies at the hands of a police officer and to restore the shaken public trust in our judicial system. It is to be expected that prosecutors and police share a close relationship and have to work cohesively together. This relationship is typically productive and is important for fighting crime. However, in the eyes of many in the public, when an officer is involved in a potential crime this relationship may cloud the investigator.

I ask that you please join me in sponsoring this worthy legislation so that we can restore the public's faith that everyone in our society is on equal footing in the criminal justice system.

MEMORANDUM

Posted: January 10, 2017 10:24 AM

From: [Senator James R. Brewster](#)

To: All Senate members

Subject: Part-Time Police Fund

In the near future, I plan on reintroducing SB 318 of last session. This legislation would create the Municipal Police Recruitment and Retention Program Fund. This Fund would make grants available for the purpose of hiring and retaining part-time police in municipalities.

The legislation would add a section to Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) to read: Municipal Police Recruitment and Retention Program. The Commission shall administer this Fund, relating to a law enforcement surcharge and make grants from the Fund for recruitment and retention of a municipality's part-time police force in accordance with this section.

The addition to Title 75 (Vehicles) will create a section to read: Law Enforcement Enhancement Surcharge. A surcharge of \$10 will be levied or imposed as provided by the law, excluding parking violations, upon conviction of the provisions of this title or other statute of the Commonwealth.

Grants shall not exceed \$5,000 per police officer position and shall be used to supplement the part-time police salary paid by the municipality up to a maximum of \$15 per hour of pay, not to exceed 85% of a full-time base salary for a police officer in the municipality.