

Good Morning Chairwoman Baker, Chairman Folmer, members of the committees and guests. I am Commissioner Frank Noonan of the Pennsylvania State Police. With me today is Lt. Colonel George Bivens, Deputy Commissioner of Operations. It is my honor to have this opportunity to testify before you today on the role of the Pennsylvania State Police in school safety.

The Pennsylvania State Police has historically been very involved in this complex and important issue. Currently, our agency works to enhance school safety in a number of key areas including the following: planning and consulting with the Department of Education and the Center for Safe Schools, intelligence analysis and information sharing, Community Service Officer assignments, School Resource Officer assignments, risk and vulnerability assessments, active shooter/hostile intruder community exercises, and coordinating specialized seminars.

The Pennsylvania State Police, Domestic Security Division, represents me on the Department of Education's Safe Schools Committee. This committee works with school districts, law enforcement, and other partners to identify student safety issues and then implements coordinated student safety strategies. The committee works to formalize relationships between schools and their responding police department to ensure crime reporting and standards for service Memorandums of Understanding. Additionally, this division partner's with the Department of Education's Center for Safe Schools to assist in the development of training material and hosting an annual school administrator's training conference.

The Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Intelligence Center monitors and analyzes all threat trends through our significant partnerships in local, state, and federal agencies. This allows us to share information quickly in the law enforcement

community, and even further by producing Community Awareness Bulletins that are shared with schools and other community partners.

Each Troop is assigned specially trained Troopers designated as Community Service Officers (CSO's). These CSO's work with community and school leaders to improve life and property safety. They plan, prepare, and present safety education programs and ensure local State Police stations have accurate school site information. They are available to assist schools in assessing the quality of their security measures and to assist in creating or updating crisis response plans.

Twelve school districts in the Commonwealth have contracted with the Pennsylvania State Police to assign specially trained Troopers designated as School Resource Officers (SRO's). These SRO's provide onsite armed police security to protect students and staff and conduct safety training including hostile action and lock-down drills as well as mentoring students.

Specially trained Troopers are designated to serve on the Department's Risk and Vulnerability Assessment Team (RVAT). This team provides unique no-cost confidential physical security assessments to facilities around the state, including schools and colleges. In conducting assessments, RVAT members work with school leads to identify vulnerabilities at their campus, and then provide specific action recommendations to better secure their schools. Interestingly, these assessments have identified a number of common elements including the following: lack of means to securely "vet" visitors, leaving exterior doors propped open, not securing classroom doors, not requiring students and staff to display photo identification cards, a lack of "all-hazard" emergency plans, and not conducting regular lock-down/hostile action drills. To date, the team has assessed over 250 schools and 20 colleges.

Troop Commanders in all Troops are tasked with working with municipal law enforcement, county and township emergency managers, and schools to practice police response to hostile events at facilities. These exercises include locating offenders to stop their violent actions and lockdown response. In 2012, Commanders have conducted 70 exercises, 24 of which were conducted at schools and 6 at colleges or universities.

Finally, as Commissioner, I oversee the Governor's Office of Homeland Security (GOHS). In 2013, the GOHS has scheduled three full day seminars in various locales throughout the Commonwealth dealing with the phenomenon of school violence. These seminars feature expert speakers from the law enforcement, first responder, medical/psychological, social fields, and other communities familiar with and experienced in these horrific events. We expect the number of these seminars to grow, and we have reached out to the Department of Education to partner with us in hosting these most worthwhile events.

In conclusion, I believe the Pennsylvania State Police has taken a significant proactive role in enhancing school safety. As the Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police, I will continue to commit the resources of our department to this critical mission.