



# POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN

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Mr. Chairman and Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to address you today. My name is Ken Grabowski, Legislative Director for the Police Officers Association of Michigan, also known as POAM.

When the state is trying to do more with less, you have a great opportunity before you. It is time to re-examine the operating structure of providing public safety services. The old ways are not working. This is not a criticism of any agency; we just believe things can be done better with the limited funds now available.

Currently the state does not get the advantages of area labor markets by providing the state police to do general law enforcement in local communities. No matter what area in the state, a trooper is paid the same rate, while local police agencies and sheriff departments are paid according to the area labor market. It is much more affordable to provide police services in Lake County than Livonia, but the state pays the same.

The state police are some of the best paid and best trained officers, which is good. But in many areas, a local community or sheriff's department can supply an officer for half the cost or less. And the recent legislative mandates on health care and contractual benefits do not affect the state police, further driving up costs of state police and driving down costs of local officers.

We believe it is time to re-examine the state's use of providing general law enforcement to communities through the state police. The use of the state police is not cost efficient doing general routine law enforcement. The state police would be better used in providing more special services.

There is currently a backlog at crime labs. Free up state police to provide their services more timely, and provide additional services such a polygraph, major crime, SWAT, etc, to all local communities.

Taking the funding used for general law enforcement and allocating it to local police and sheriff departments will get more manpower for the cost. Use any savings to add manpower to state police for specialized services.