

PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE BUDGET HEARING WRAP

Wednesday, March 11, 2026



General Overview:

Lieutenant Colonel George L. Bivens, Acting Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) Commissioner, and senior PSP staff testified before the House Appropriations Committee today. The hearing began with condolences and prayers for the family of fallen Trooper, Corporal Tim O'Connor. House Republicans focused their questions on whether the Governor's proposal adequately meets the needs of law enforcement, Trooper complement, improvements to statewide radio, human trafficking enforcement, and gun background checks.

Key Takeaways:

- The Governor is proposing to spend a total of \$1.33 billion from the General Fund for the Pennsylvania State Police for Fiscal Year 2026-27, which is roughly 2.6% of the governor's total spending proposal.
 - This is an overall increase of \$117.0 million, or 9.4% over the current fiscal year.
 - PSP also receives \$250 million from the Motor License Fund.
- House Republicans want to ensure we have enough Troopers to keep Pennsylvanians safe. PSP leadership advocated to remove the complement cap to enable the agency to keep up with training new Troopers while managing upcoming retirements.
 - PSP believes it needs to increase the current complement by about 300 to 400 positions.
- PSP shared that they have not taken an official position on the Governor's recreational marijuana proposal.
- Statewide radio connectivity has been an issue for decades. Members learned that PSP has finally connected their radios with 35 county Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), commonly called 911 centers, the state of New Jersey, and FEMA region 3. There are 20 county PSAPs currently working to connect to the system, with the goal of connecting all county PSAPs by the end of next year.
- PSP applicants are no longer required to have a college degree. Members learned that recruitment has improved and that PSP continues to maintain high standards in its selection process.
- Pennsylvania requires two background checks to purchase a gun: the National Instant Check System (NICS) and the Pennsylvania Instant Check System (PICS). PSP reported that the PICS system caught over 86 individuals with active warrants trying to buy a firearm for which NICS did not alert last year.
- Members were pleased to learn PSP has plans to combat human trafficking during the many events planned for the America 250 celebration, World Cup, and other high-profile events planned for 2026.

Notable Q&A:



Rep. Jamie Barton asked PSP to explain the complement cap and why it needs to be increased.

Rep. Eric Davanzo received an update on PSP recruitment following the removal of the college graduation requirement.



Rep. Marla Brown inquires how this budget will support efforts to combat human trafficking.