

Testimony provided by:

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**Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Judiciary Committee
Hon. Thomas R. Caltagirone, Chairman
Hon. Ron Marsico, Republican Chairman**

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On behalf of the more than 40,000 law enforcement officers comprising the membership of the Pennsylvania Fraternal Order of Police, I thank Chairman Caltagirone and Chairman Marsico, the members of the committee for your support in our mutual goal of protecting and serving the citizens of the Commonwealth.

I speak today in support of the brave, hardworking and dedicated Deputy Sheriffs who make up such a valuable part of Pennsylvania's law enforcement community, and the membership of the Pennsylvania Fraternal Order of Police. It is through their efforts that the governments and courts of our 67 counties are able to function in a safe and orderly manner. Because I support Deputy Sheriffs, and their important mission, I must voice objection to House Bill 466 presently under consideration by the Committee.

With the growth of our society, our criminal justice system has been required to grow and adapt to many new challenges. Recently, United States Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor highlighted these challenges by observing that attacks upon our courts, both physical and political, is developing into a disturbing trend. More and more, the courts have had to rely upon the constitutional office of County Sheriff, and the Deputies that make up the workforce of that office, to ensure the safe, stable operation of our criminal and civil justice systems. For the Deputy Sheriffs of the Commonwealth, this is a task to which they have risen and excelled.

House Bill 466 does a disservice to these dedicated employees by potentially detracting from their critical mission to satisfy the personal ambitions of 67 row officers. In a force already stretched thin, House Bill 466 would divert time, resources and manpower from the critical duties of Deputy Sheriffs throughout the Commonwealth in ensuring the safe, and stable operation of our judicial system. Aid to these law enforcement officers will only come in expanding their numbers and funding, not in expanding their mandate.

It is therefore with the interests of the men and women of the Fraternal Order of Police who serve as Deputy Sheriffs in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that I urge the Committee to recognize the important work they do and to provide real assistance to them. The first step in providing that assistance is to reject the provisions of House Bill 466.

With that, let me thank you again for your leadership and the opportunity to submit this written testimony.