

CITY OF NEW KENSINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Chief Ronald A. Zellers

FAX

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Number of pages (including cover page): 6

Date: 6-28-2011

Subject: Testimony on H.C. 1289

Information: _____

Sent by: *Chief Ronald A Zellers*
Name Title New Kensington Police Department

RONALD A. ZELLERS**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:**

2009 - 2011 Chief of Police, City of New Kensington Police Department
Duties: Department head, 22 full time police officers, cell watch/dispatch 4 full time, 5 part time employees. Records room, 1 full time employee.

2000 - 2009 Detective Lieutenant, Vice Unit/Major Crimes/Supervisor
City of New Kensington Police Department, New Kensington, Pennsylvania
Duties: General Supervision; general investigations; vice and narcotics investigations; major crimes investigations; homicide investigations;
Coordinator: "Operation Weed & Seed"; Field Supervisor, Region V Westmoreland County Task Force (Office of the Attorney General) (2000-2004);

1993 - 2000 Detective Sergeant, City of New Kensington Police Department
Duties: Supervisor; general investigations; major crimes investigations; vice and narcotics investigations; Coordinator: "Operation Dart" (1999); Coordinator, "Operation Triggerlock" (1998).

1992 - 1993 Sergeant/Shift Supervisor, City of New Kensington Police Department
Duties: Shift Supervisor; general patrol.

1988 - 1992 Patrolman, City of New Kensington Police Department
Duties: General patrol; K-9 Officer

1987- 1988 Patrolman, Borough of Irwin Police Department
Irwin, Pennsylvania
Duties: General patrol; K-9 Officer

MISCELLANEOUS:

2002 - present	Coordinator: "Operation Weed & Seed" - City of New Kensington, City of Arnold and Pennsylvania State Police
2000-2004	Field Supervisor: Region V Attorney General's Drug Task Force (Westmoreland County)
1999	Coordinator, "Operation Dart" - City of New Kensington and Pennsylvania State Police
1998	Coordinator, "Operation Triggerlock" - City of New Kensington and Pennsylvania State Police
1997	Sworn Special County Detective - Westmoreland County District Attorney's Office Special Deputation - United States Justice Department (B.A.T.F.)
1995	Special Deputation - United States Department of Justice (F.B.I.)

1994	D.A.R.E. Instructor – Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
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EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS:

1984	Act 235 Certification (Suburban Academy of Law Enforcement)
1986	Indiana University of Pennsylvania Police Academy First Responder Certification (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
1987-1989	K-9 North American Police Work Dog Association (Norfolk, VA)
1989	Chemical Test for Intoxication – Intoxylizer Model 5000 (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
1990	On-Scene Accident Investigation – Homicide by Vehicle (Pennsylvania Department of Education)
1991	Passenger Vehicle Inspection (Pennsylvania Department of Education) Advanced Traffic Accident Investigation (Pennsylvania Department of Education) Commercial Vehicle Accident Investigation (Pennsylvania Department of Education)
1992	Inspection of Commercial Vehicles in Traffic Accidents (Pennsylvania Department of Education)
1993	National Fire Academy (Pennsylvania State Fire Academy)
1994	Narcotics Screening and Identification Training (Becton Dickenson Public Safety) Latent Fingerprints/Rolled Ink Impressions (Westmoreland County District Attorney's Office) Community Oriented Policing (United States Department of Justice)
1995	Pennsylvania Certified Accident reconstruction (Pennsylvania Department of Education) Class "A" Certification – "A-Tech" – Electronic Surveillance (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
1996	Pennsylvania State Police Strategic Planning Conference (Pennsylvania State Police)
1997	Interview and Interrogation Techniques (United States Department of Justice) Criminal Investigation Techniques (United States Department of Justice) Fingerprint Training (Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association) NIK Polytesting System of Narcotics Identification (Public Safety Inc.)
1998	Homicide Investigator's Seminar (Pennsylvania Homicide Association) Cultural Diversity/Sensitivity (United States Department of Justice) Certified Instructor – Police Non-Lethal Use of Force (TJA Group)
1999	Advanced Homicide Investigation (B, Gerbeth, New York City Police Department) Computer Crimes Awareness (United States Department of Justice)

2000	Top Gun Undercover Drug Law Enforcement Training (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania – Fort Indiantown Gap, PA) Underwater Investigations/Death Investigations and Evidence Recovery (Professional Diving Services, Springdale, PA)
<u>EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS, cont.</u>	
2001	Top Gun Instructor – Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Fort Indiantown Gap, PA) Top Gun Instructor – State of Maryland (Fort Indiantown Gap, PA) Top Gun Instructor – State of Connecticut (Fort Indiantown Gap, PA) Drug Training in GHB, MDMA, LSD, Ketamine, Letter Drugs, Raves and Club Drugs (Pennsylvania Attorney General's Office) BAC Datamaster – Chemical Test for Intoxication (Commonwealth of Pennsylvania)
2003	Drug Identification Course (Northeast Counterdrug Training Center)
2004	Guest Instructor, Criminal Justice Program (ICM School of Business)
2006	Prescription Drug Abuse Course (Purdue Pharma L.P)

Recognized and has testified as an expert in Narcotic Investigations in local, State and Federal Court system.

House bill 1289**Sentencing enhancement for trafficking drugs in the presence of a minor**

Working vice, undercover narcotics, for approximately 15 years has provided me an insight into the dark dangerous world of narcotics distribution. Over the past fifteen years I have observed this life style and have watched it grow into a world of pure violence, a world where life has no meaning, a complete disregard for family, friends, spouses and children. A world where money comes first. I have personally witnessed individuals on numerous occasions sell "crack" cocaine, heroin and marijuana from within their homes, drugs out in the open on coffee tables, countertops and other places in the residence while children play in the same area. Through the use of confidential informants I been advised that the drug transactions have occurred in the same room with children present. I have observed drug dealers keep their "stash" or quantity of "crack" cocaine and heroin under the mattress of cribs were infants sleep. I have observed "cooking utensils" that were used to prepare "crack" cocaine in the same microwave oven with baby bottles of formula.

Most of all I have witnessed the violence, tragedy, disfiguration and months of terrible pain suffered by innocent children whose parents were involved in the drug trade. One incident I would like to share which impacted myself and other officers to the point that we will remember this night as long as we live. Selling "crack cocaine" from the apartment where a small female child, 5 years old at the time of the incident lived with her parents in the City of New Kensington.

Police were dispatched to this Constitution Blvd. address for a report of multiple shots fired, possible home invasion. Upon arrival police encountered two individuals in the apartment (father & mother) of the injured child. I arrived within minutes of the marked unit, I was working as a vice detective that night. As I entered the apartment I observed multiple bullet holes in the kitchen and livingroom, a glass fish tank shattered from a bullet strike. The mother of the child noticed a bullet hole on the closed bedroom door, this is the bedroom where the five year old girl had been placed in bed and had fallen asleep for the night. Upon opening the door, the 5 year old girl, in shock, lay gut shoot in her bed. Her stomach pierced and open up from the bullet, bowels protruding from the stomach. Officers immediately called for an ambulance but knew there was very little time. The hospital was only blocks away so the little girl was carried by officers to a squad car and transported to the hospital. This little girl layed for months with her bowels exposed and wrapped in linen. She suffered multiple operations not to mention a trauma that she will live with forever.

After an extensive investigation it was determined that the parents has received a kilo of cocaine earlier in the day, had began "rocking" it up and selling it from the residence. Individuals purchasing the "crack" cocaine decided to break into the residence and steal the remaining cocaine. A gun fight

ensued, the father of the child firing at the intruders and the intruders firing at the child's father . It was later determined that the bullet that struck the child was fired by her father.

This is but one example of the dangers these innocent children must live with because their parents choose a life a narcotics distribution.

These children like all children learn by the things they see happening around them. The children of drug dealers, in my observations, grow up to be drug dealers themselves if they manage to live long enough.

Chief Ronald A. Zellers

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