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Government Relations

**HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
Public Hearing on House Bill 2148
Room 140 ~ Main Capitol
April 4, 2018
10:00am**

Testimony in support of HB2148, Proposed Police Radar Legislation

Good Morning Chairman Taylor and Chairman Keller

Delaware River Port Authority (hereafter referred to DRPA), would like to thank you for allowing our agency to submit testimony for this public hearing. We also would like to thank Rep. Greg Rothman for introducing **HB 2148, *Proposed Police Radar Legislation***. We request that this legislation be amended to include the Delaware River Port Authority Police Department into the six year test period for RADAR enforcement. As a bi-state agency with 144 full-time, sworn law enforcement officers, the DRPA Police Department is the ideal testing agency for this legislation. Although prohibited by law from operating speed RADAR within the Commonwealth, these officers have been utilizing RADAR devices to enforce the motor vehicle laws of New Jersey for more than a quarter-century. In accordance with New Jersey standards, each RADAR operator must be certified to operate the approved RADAR device and must receive periodic refresher training and recertification. Before operator certification is granted, the officer must meet the following requirements:

- Minimum of four (4) hours classroom instruction on the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice RADAR manual.
- Minimum of four (4) hours supervised hands-on practical training in RADAR operation.
- Minimum of eighty (80) hours hands-on non-enforcement operation of the RADAR equipment.

In 2017, our police department answered nearly 100,000 calls for service, and of those, 17,000 were motor vehicle stops. Specifically, the members of the department issued 569 speeding tickets. Of those, 63 were issued in Pennsylvania while the remaining 506 were issued in New Jersey tickets using the BEE III RADAR units as the primary means of speed detection. In addition to the summonses and citations, DRPA police issued 3600 warnings for speeding.

As a bi-state agency, the department relies on local courts, none of the speeding violation, citations, or summonses generated by members of the department result in revenue for the DRPA. As a result of this legal landscape, the common concerns about "speed traps" generating revenue simply do not apply since the DRPA operates separately from the local courts.

The DRPA Police have a long history of law enforcement activities as they monitor the many motorists that frequent our four (4) bridges and within the port districts established in 36 Pa. C.S. § 3504.1 et seq. The police officers of DRPA's Police Department have been providing police services within Pennsylvania for over 90 years. The lineage of the department can be traced back to 1926 when Alfred Souder left the Philadelphia Police Department to serve as the first superintendent of the newly formed bridge police force.

The DRPA Compact dictates that the primary mission of the DRPA's Police Department is to "keep safety and preserve order" on the property owned, leased, or operated by DRPA/PATCO. To accomplish this mission, both Pennsylvania and New Jersey have vested the police officers of the department with "*...all of the powers...and all of the immunities conferred by law on police officers or municipal police officers in the enforcement of the laws of the State of New Jersey and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.*"¹

Operating under 36 Pa. C.S. § 3504.1 et seq., the officers of the department are entrusted with a unique bi-state authority. We believe that House Bill 2148; takes a step forward to ensure the use of RADAR equipment to assist with speed enforcement, which will ultimately become the most effective method of maintaining public safety by curtailing excessive speed on our roads & bridges.

Thank you for time and consideration!

¹ Pennsylvania 36 P.S. § 3504.1