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**W00A**  
**Department of State Police**  
**FY 2026 Operating Budget**  
**Response to the Department of Legislative Services Analysis**

**House Appropriations Committee**  
**Public Safety and Administration Subcommittee**  
**Delegate Jazz Lewis, Chair**  
**February 19, 2025**

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**  
**Public Safety, Transportation, and Environment Subcommittee**  
**Senator Michael Jackson, Chair**  
**February 14, 2025**

**Introduction**

The Department of State Police (DSP) appreciates this opportunity to provide responses to recommendations and requested updates contained in the Operating Budget Analysis prepared by the Department of Legislative Services (DLS).

DSP’s responses to the recommendations and requested updates:

On page 18, The fiscal 2026 allowance includes more expenditures than the department estimates that it will spend. Though the budget includes \$3.3 million, the department reports its estimated expenditures to be \$2.6 million in both fiscal 2025 and 2026. **The Department of Legislative Services (DLS) recommends that \$690,724 in special funds in fiscal 2026 be reduced to reflect anticipated expenditures.**

**Agency Response:**

DSP does not concur with this recommendation.

Based on data from the 2022 Maryland Uniform Crime report, beginning in September 2022, vehicle thefts began to increase as a result of the social media depiction of how to steal certain Kia/Hyundai vehicles. Overall, in 2022, vehicle theft increased 4% and carjackings increased

34% over the previous year. In 2022 motor vehicle theft cases totaled 12,019; in 2023 motor vehicle theft cases totaled 23,955. In 2022 reported carjacking cases totaled 1424; in 2023 reported carjacking cases totaled 1458. Currently Hyundai/Kia thefts are still a problem but not at the level that they were in 2022. The trends we are seeing are Infiniti and Lexus thefts and other high-end vehicles (thieves are using an Autel device to program a new key fob), Vehicle Finance Fraud, Title Fraud, Replating stolen vehicles w/ new VIN numbers, Exportation of stolen vehicles, Joyriding and Carjacking. Vehicle theft is a quality-of-life crime that affects all citizens, in spite of social or economic status. The Council remains committed to its charter and mission to reduce the incidences of vehicle theft and its related crimes.

The Vehicle Theft Prevention Council supports grantees, educates the public, and trains law enforcement to detect and solve these ever-evolving crimes. The Vehicle Theft Prevention Council fund is non-lapsing. This fund had a carry forward balance which will allow for an increase to grants to local public safety agencies. This will allow local agencies to better address the increase in vehicle crimes. Reducing this appropriation will restrict the Department's ability to provide this critical funding. The Department estimates the fund will have higher expenses in both FY25 and FY26. It is expected that the ending balance of the fund will be approximately \$5,000 after estimated expenditures in FY26. Therefore, the Department requests to continue with the same appropriation as FY25 and take no reductions.

On page 18, "Beginning in fiscal 2023, the department's budget included \$333,000 in general funds for a grant to the Maryland Sheriffs' Association to expand operational training and support. This grant originated as part of an initiative to enhance funding for public safety and was intended to provide the organization with \$1.0 million over three fiscal years. This grant is not mandated, but the planned funding was provided in fiscal 2023, 2024, and 2025. **Since funding was not planned for fiscal 2026, DLS recommends deleting the \$333,000 general fund appropriation for the Maryland Sheriffs' Association.**"

**Agency Response:**

DSP has concerns with this recommendation.

The funds invested to expand operational training and support of local law enforcement agencies is priceless. Although not mandated, this investment assists in providing executive level training to over 150 certified law enforcement agencies in Maryland promotes the effectiveness of the law enforcement profession, enhances public confidence in the police and improves the quality of life in the communities of those 150 law enforcement agencies. The professional development seminars and the aspiring leaders program prepare the future generation of leaders as they ascend to the next step in their law enforcement careers while providing Maryland Police Training Commission validated in-service credits to each graduate of the courses. Continuing to fund these education programs has significant value.

On page 19, “Cadets are individuals who are hired before they are eligible to participate in the Trooper Academy. They must be between 18 and 20.5 years old. There are 26.0 trooper cadet positions in the working appropriation, 11.0 of which are vacant as of December 31, 2024, and 3.0 of which have been vacant for over a year. The addition of the 15.0 new positions and the reclassifying of 4.0 positions between fiscal years means that there would be 45.0 trooper cadet positions in fiscal 2026. The department reports that the cadet positions are added via deficiency appropriation. Funding associated with that action, \$1,047,270 in special funds, is continued in the fiscal 2026 allowance. The fiscal 2026 allowance also includes \$1.1 million in new funding for these 15.0 positions.” **DLS recommends reducing the special fund appropriation by \$1,047,270 in fiscal 2026 to eliminate this double count. Given that the funding in fiscal 2025 for the cadet positions appears for the purpose of reclassification, it is the understanding of DLS that DSP is reclassifying existing vacant positions rather than creating new positions. Therefore, DLS recommends deleting the 15.0 new vacant positions.**

**Agency Response:**

DSP does not concur with this recommendation.

The reclassifying of cadet positions will occur with General Fund PINs, not Special Funds. The Department plans to expand the Cadet program by an additional 25 positions. Fifteen will be funded through Special Funds. These are new positions; they are not existing PINs that would be reclassified. The 10 PINs funded through General Funds will be reclassified PINs. The Department requests the 15 Special Fund PINs remain.

**On page 19, DSP should comment on its aging position count and identify any plans to fill, reclassify, or abolish positions that have not been filled in over 24 months.**

**Agency Response:**

Over the past 24 months it must be noted that DSP has been filling more recently vacated PINs instead of filling the oldest ones PINs first. While it may appear that these older PINs are not needed, that is far from the case. Currently, there are 74 open positions that have been vacant for over 24 months. There are 52 sworn positions. The Department will be holding an Academy Class beginning on February 24, 2025. That will fill at least 34 of these open sworn positions. Open civilian positions older than 24 months, will be filled over the next three months, as the Department has plans to convert at least 18 more contractual positions. These conversions will be done with the oldest vacant PINs first. The Department plans on continuing this practice of filling the oldest vacated PINs first.

**On page 24, In November 2023, DSP also launched its foundational stakeholder project, an effort to gather feedback from frontline employees of the department regarding recruiting, performance, promotions, transfers, and improving DSP operations, including how to increase employee morale and retention. It was the first of five projects in the performance perspectives program planned for fiscal 2024 and 2025. DSP should update the committees on its progress in implementing the second phase of the workforce assessment study and the performance perspectives program.**

**Agency Response:**

Workforce Assessment Study update: The DSP has a recently approved contract with Psychometric Solutions to develop a detailed work plan, survey development, training and education, and data analysis. The DSP’s Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has the lead role in this project and will be holding a kick-off meeting with the vendor in the upcoming weeks.

Performance Perspectives Program (P3) update: Multiple stages of the program have been completed: Second Phase engaged Supervisory Stakeholders, Third Phase engaged Director Stakeholders, Fourth Phase engaged Senior Stakeholders, Fifth Phase engaged and continues to engage a collaborative set of Stakeholders. We continue to be in phase 5 of the P3 program. This phase functions as a continuous data gathering and quality assurance phase. Liaisons from all levels of the department meet virtually twice a year (currently scheduled for April and September) to help ensure our objectives are still being met and to identify opportunities for improvements.

On page 25, Language in the fiscal 2025 Budget Bill restricted \$250,000 in general funds pending the submission of the 2022 UCR. DSP submitted the data verification letter on November 4, 2024, and the 2023 UCR on December 23, 2024. **DLS therefore recommends the release of withheld funds and will process a letter to this effect if no objections are raised by the committees during the budget hearings.**

**Agency Response:**

DSP concurs with this recommendation.

On page 25, The budget committees may wish to continue adopting this annual language, until the contributing agencies are able to submit complete NIBRS data by November 1, and the department can consistently submit the UCR in a timely manner. **DLS recommends adding annual budget language restricting funds pending the receipt of the 2024 UCR.**

**Agency Response:**

DSP concurs with this recommendation.