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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

AUDITOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

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July 30, 2020

Senator William N. Brownsberger
24 Beacon Street, Room 319
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz
24 Beacon Street, Room 111
Boston, MA 02133

Senator Bruce E. Tarr
24 Beacon Street, Room 308
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Claire D. Cronin
24 Beacon Street, Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Carlos Gonzalez
24 Beacon Street, Room 26
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Timothy R. Whelan
24 Beacon Street, Room 542
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Colleagues:

As you begin reconciling the bills on policing reform, I want to thank you for your commitment to this important work and raise several issues that warrant your attention. As you know, my office released a report on police training last fall, which called for the implementation of POST in Massachusetts. I am pleased that the bills passed by both branches move us along this path.

This report also makes clear, however, the current process to provide and fund in-service municipal police training is inadequate.

Meeting police training requirements is costly and a burden largely carried by cities and towns. As shown in our report, municipalities spend over \$22 million per year on in-service training, greatly outweighing the \$1.5 million spent by the Municipal Police Training Committee (MPTC). While the legislature set a dedicated funding source for the MPTC, the rental car surcharge will no doubt present uncertainty given the changing patterns of travel due to COVID-19. We must address the proper level of appropriation to provide police officers with a pathway to meet these higher standards and reduce the burden on municipalities.

Auditor Suzanne M. Bump Letter of Testimony

July 30th, 2020

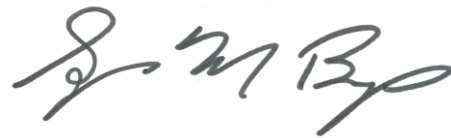
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Here are a few of the specific areas that will require additional resources to make this program successful:

- The MPTC needs funds to expand the reach of its services to make training consistent across the Commonwealth.
- The bills add training curriculum in important subject areas. Funding will be needed to support course development, certification of instructors, and implementation of these standards.
- In our report, we point to the inadequacy of MPTC training facilities. The implementation of these training standards requires a professional environment. This is not something that will be rectified in a single year, which highlights the importance of requiring that the MPTC undergo a strategic planning process to help it address its needs related to facilities, curriculum, instructors, and more.
- There are discussions of an additional certification at the department level which will also require resources if you choose to make this a requirement where it is currently optional.

I thank you for your efforts to develop a final piece of legislation that will improve public safety and build trust in law enforcement, and appreciate your attention to the issues I've raised today. As always, my office stands ready to assist you in any way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S M Bump', written in a cursive style.

Suzanne M. Bump
Auditor of the Commonwealth