

Good Afternoon, Director Cade, OMB Staff, and members of the public, it is an honor to appear before you today to present an overview of the Department of Safety and Homeland Security FY 25 Operating and Capital Budget Requests.

On behalf of our Department, thank you for the support and guidance we receive from you and the OMB Staff, which is critically important to our success.

As a result of FY 24 legislative action, DSHS has gained two new Divisions. The Office of the Marijuana Commission (OMC) was formed as a result of the passage of House Bill 2, The Marijuana Control Act. Robert Coupe is the Commissioner of OMC and is in the process of hiring staff and creating the policies and procedures to govern its operation.

The second new Division is The Office of the Police Officer Standards and Training Commission and the Delaware Police Accreditation Commission (POST/DPAC) which was formed with the passage of House Bill 206. This legislation revamped the Council on Police Training and combined the newly created POST with the existing Delaware Police Accreditation Commission. Executive Director Sean Moriarty is hiring staff and beginning to create the policies and procedures for the commission.

The final Division change in FY 24 was the transfer of The Office of the Alcoholic and Beverage Control Commissioner to the Department of State.

I will begin by presenting our prioritized Door Opener Requests

Our highest priority Door Opener for FY 25 is for \$1,590.0 to address the rising costs of vehicle fuel for the State Police. Due to increased cost and consumption, our fuel costs have risen significantly.

Along with increased vehicle fuel costs, we are seeking a \$210.3 increase in funding for aviation fuel to address the rising costs experienced by the aviation section.

The State Police is requesting funds to maintain the Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS). We are requesting funding for \$366.0 to add to existing funding for the annual maintenance costs for the AFIS-Evergreen fingerprint verification system.

Our remaining Door Openers address annualizations of employee salaries which were partially funded in FY 24, the addition of seven positions for Capitol Police needed to staff the new Sussex County Family Court and an increase in the Taser Contract as a result of House Bill 2, the Marijuana Control Act.

I would now like to review our prioritized requests within the 1% Discretionary Growth target.

Our first request is to fund two forensic firearm positions for the Delaware State Police Forensic Firearms Laboratory. The state police is the only agency in the state that conducts forensic firearms examinations. Currently, DSP has one full-time examiner and three contract examiners. The contract examiners are needed due to the industry requirement of a peer review of all findings. The addition of two full-time examiners will reduce the need for contract examiners. We are requesting \$202.6 to hire the two forensic firearms examiners.

Our second request is \$307.1 to address a needed inflationary base budget adjustment. DSP, like other agencies, has been challenged by price increases in technology and contractual support. DSP has submitted requests for funding to address inflation in the previous three budget requests. Some assistance has been provided in one-time funding, however in order to be sustainable, we request the funding provided to the base budget.

Our third request is for \$202.0 to allow the expanded Division of Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement to contract with Fleet Services to acquire the needed additional vehicles as a result of the added personnel through the FY 24 House Bill 2, Marijuana Control Act.

The majority of our remaining 1% Discretionary Growth requests address technology needs including software programs to address police accountability, track marijuana from seed to sale as required by law, a wellness app that provides support to DSP employees, retired employees, and their families, PC Replacements within our Divisions excluding DEMA and DSP, and licensing costs for software used by DATE to have access to an electronic listing of alcohol distributors.

I would now like to review our three one-time funding requests.

Our first one-time funding request is to replace 289 bullet-resistant vests for the State Police that are due to reach the expiration of the industry-wide standard five-year warranty period. We request \$549.2 in addition to the \$110.0 currently provided in our base budget to fund the purchase.

Our second one-time funding request is for Capitol Police to upgrade their current issued handgun to the same type of weapon used by the State Police. The upgrade to the SigSauer P320 will cost \$92.4.

Our third one-time funding request is for \$89.0 to purchase portable radios for the newly hired personnel assigned to DATE in accordance with House Bill 2, the Marijuana Control Act.

I would now like to present an overview of our Capital Budget requests for FY 25

Our Capital Budget requests for FY 2025 are rather extensive. In the interest of time, I will highlight our top priorities.

Our first funding request is for Minor Capital Improvement Funding (or MCI) traditionally utilized to repair and maintain the State Police Troops and facilities consistent with the recommendations of Facilities Management. We are requesting \$1.25M.

Our second request is to fully fund the Troop 4 Replacement Project. We are requesting \$26.0M for this project when combined with previous funding, the project will be fully funded.

Technology needs comprise a majority of our Capital Budget requests. Due to the industry change from 4G to 5G technology, we need to also change to 5G. DSP needs to upgrade the software which is critical in providing cellular data from laptops and in-car cameras to the internal network. DSP also needs to upgrade the system that stores all data that is stored on division-wide PCs.

As a result of the changes in technology, we are requesting funding to address the need to upgrade diagnostic equipment needed by the Division of Communications to maintain the components of the 800 MHz radio system. The Forensic Firearms Unit is requesting funding to purchase an improved firearms comparison system which is vital to meet the scrutiny faced in court cases.

Advances in technology created an open and unified intelligence ecosystem that integrates and enhances all public safety and investigation assets for law enforcement and first responders. The Fusus Real-Time Crime Center in the Cloud is a school/community security system that extracts and unifies live video, data, and sensor feeds from virtually any source, enhancing the situational awareness and investigative capabilities of law enforcement agencies.

Our remaining Capital Budget requests are for funding to continue to replace the 800 MHz shelters that are deteriorating, replace bomb robots that reached the limits of their service life, construct a secure/climatized evidence building for the Division of Alcohol Enforcement, and replace an armored rescue vehicle used by the state police in hostage and barricaded subject incidents.

This concludes the highlights of our FY 25 Operating and Capital Budget requests. My staff and I stand by ready to answer any questions you may have. For additional details of our requests, I have prepared informational packets for your review.