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NEW JERSEY SUPERIOR OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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THE NEW JERSEY SUPERIOR OFFICERS ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES ITS FULL SUPPORT OF THE TRANSFER OF PROBATION OFFICERS TO THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH.

Legislation was introduced in June that would authorize Probation Officers to exercise police powers, and to act as officers for the detection, apprehension, arrest, and conviction of offenders against the law. The addition of several thousand more law enforcement officers available and authorized to carry out police functions would serve to enhance safety and security for the citizens of New Jersey. The authorization to act as a full law enforcement officer of the State of New Jersey would also assist Probation Officers in better carrying out the functions of their current assignments in tracking and supervising offenders assigned by the courts. It would allow them to arrest probationers, enforce the criminal laws of the State of New Jersey, and to enforce warrants for the apprehension and arrest of probationers who violate conditions of probation.

A constitutional amendment that would allow the transfer of probation functions from the Judiciary to the Department of Law and Public Safety has also been proposed. This constitutional amendment would be placed on the ballot at the next general election to be voted on by the citizens of New Jersey.

The New Jersey Superior Officers Association is in full support of the transfer of all probation functions from the Judiciary to the Executive Branch of state government. We support any legislation that would authorize Probation Officers to execute full police powers. The addition of these invaluable, trained, professional law enforcement officers would enhance public safety at minimal or no additional expense.

The New Jersey Superior Officers Association strongly urges the state's legislators, and the public, to support these legislative proposals.

Jeffrey Smith, President