



***Office of Chief Public Defender
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**Testimony of
Deborah Del Prete Sullivan, Legal Counsel, Director
Public Safety Committee Public Hearing February 16, 2017
Proposed Bill No. 242**

**An Act Studying the Use of Body-Worn
Recording Equipment by Law Enforcement**

The Office of Chief Public Defender supports passage of this bill which would create a task force to review and make legislative recommendations regarding the use of body cameras by law enforcement. Intended to increase accountability of law enforcement, body camera legislation was adopted to improve trust between law enforcement and the communities served. However, body cameras are currently utilized by just over 10% of municipal police departments despite the availability of reimbursement funding. Pursuant to PA 15-4, a grant program was established in which the costs for the purchase of cameras and digital data storage devices or services (for a certain period of time) would be reimbursed to municipal and state university law enforcement. Currently, citing costs for storage of the videos, a number of departments have not implemented the use of the equipment. While the formation of a task force may not be

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able to provide funding readily, it could closely study the concerns of law enforcement, including the costs to implement the use of body cameras and storage. It could also study whether new technology exists that may assist in full implementation and how other states have been able to employ this technology.