

*Proposed  
Statement*

STATEMENT on Law Enforcement

[c. 1947]

"The primary duty and responsibility of local law enforcement rests on local law enforcement officers. The small number of officers comprising the State Constabulary will not permit them to undertake the overwhelming responsibility of law enforcement in the various municipalities and 46 counties of the State. The Constabulary was set up and designed as a supplementary force to assist the sheriffs and other local law enforcement agencies, in these situations and major law enforcement problems where the sheriff and other local authorities needed additional help."

"It is not and will not be the intention or prerogative of the State Constabulary to usurp the power and authority of the sheriffs, mayors, and chiefs of police. The sheriff of a county is the supreme law enforcement officer in the county. He is duly elected by the people of the county for this purpose. The people of the county naturally look to their elected law enforcement representative for first line protection. (The State Constabulary, therefore, has jurisdiction in a particular county only when the sheriff and other law enforcement agencies have exhausted their efforts and call upon the constabulary for assistance.)"

"The State Constabulary was not created by the legislature as an interfering agency simply to duplicate the efforts of the sheriffs, mayors and chiefs of police. The constabulary's role is one of assistance to the local authorities in those major matters where the local authorities need additional help - and such will be the policy of the constabulary's functions. The integrity of the local law enforcement authorities will be respected by the constabulary forces and responsibility for local law and order placed on the sheriffs, mayors, and chiefs of police where it should be."

"The main function of the State Constabulary is to assist local officers engaged in major law enforcement, and in the investigation of crimes of importance."

"If local authorities seek assistance, they will find Chief Joel D. Townsend of the State Constabulary ready to give assistance at all times."