

Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association

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Final: 2510

January 11, 2005

Raymond Rugh
 Chief, Equipment Division
 Department of Transportation
 17th and Arsenal Boulevard
 Harrisburg, PA 17120

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 2006 JAN 12 AM 9:56
 INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
 REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Rugh:

The Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association is in receipt of a proposed regulation and wishes this letter to serve as public comment on such. The proposed regulation is identified as Regulation #18-404, (#2510) and entitled "Flashing or Revolving Lights on Emergency and Authorized Vehicles."

Our comments are as follows:

§ 173.3. Display requirements.

(4) *Combination red-and-blue lights.* [Under] Vehicles listed under 75 Pa.C.S. § 4571(b), police, sheriff, coroner, medical examiner or fire police vehicles may be equipped with flashing or revolving blue lights in addition to red lights—combination red-and-blue lights] may display combination red-and-blue lights. The privately-owned vehicles [of a police chief, assistant police chief, fire police captain and fire police lieutenant] listed under 75 Pa.C.S. § 102 (relating to definitions of an emergency vehicle) shall be equipped under [paragraph (2)] 75 Pa.C.S. § 4571(a).

It is our position that ONLY POLICE should have the combination of red and blue lights. This would make it very clear to the motoring public that a vehicle displaying this color combination is a law enforcement agency that is authorized to affect a traffic stop. It is imperative that law enforcement solidify the public's recognition of a vehicle for which they must stop and this recognition needs to be consistent. Without such recognition, the public's safety is at risk allowing greater potential for impersonation of a police officer, abuse of power and other concerns. The combination of red and blue lights should only be for police officers.

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(3) Authorized vehicles.

(ii) The installation or use of additional flashing or strobe lights in existing vehicular lighting modules/assemblies, such as headlights, parking lights, taillights, is expressly prohibited.


By our interpretation, this would remove the ability from law enforcement to put strobe packs inside corner parking lamps or break lamps or inside back-up lamps which is a common practice today and has been for some time. Additionally, no where do the proposed regulations permit the use of incorporating the ability to flash the white back-up lamps in conjunction with flashing red tail lamps as is also current practice in many police agencies.

This would be an absolute detriment to law enforcement and a very serious safety concern. The public needs to be able to clearly see a police vehicle for their own safety as well as the safety of the police officers. This proposed regulation takes us back to the early 1980s where "flashing four ways" were the only indication of a police vehicle pulled off to the side of a roadway. We have made great strides in safety for law enforcement officers and continue to try to do so with legislation such as SB 703 requiring motorists to Move Over when they see a police vehicle engaged in a traffic stop. A step backwards such as this opens the door to serious safety issues for law enforcement and those they are sworn to protect and serve.

This letter shall also serve as our formal request to receive notice of any amendments or changes to the proposed regulation pursuant to Sections 5.1(a) and (b) of the Regulatory Review Act.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposed regulations.

Sincerely,


 Amy K. Corl
 Executive Director

cc: John R. McGinley, Jr. Chairman, IRRC re: regulation number: #18-404, (#2510).