



**County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers
Association of Pennsylvania**

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Mr. Arthur Coccodrilli
Chairman
Independent Regulatory Review Commission
14th Floor, Harrisstown 2
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Coccodrilli:

I am writing in support of Final-Form Regulation #41-18 (IRRC # 2576) pertaining to the County Probation and Parole Officers' Firearm Education and Training Commission ("FETC").

Prior to the passage of Act 158 of 1994, there were no standardized firearms training requirements or certification for county probation officers as there was for police and other segments of the law enforcement community. Probation departments were faced with the need to develop their own firearms programs, education and training and standards related to the use of force, types of equipment and instructors. They relied on police departments and sheriffs' offices for training and qualification but again, there was no standardization across the Commonwealth.

In 1991, the County Chief Adult Probation and Parole Officers' Association of Pennsylvania (CCAPPOAP) formed a Firearms Committee to research the use of firearms by county probation and parole officers. That Committee, working with staff from Senator Robert D. Robbins' office, drafted language resulting in the passage of Act 158 in 1994, resulting in the enabling legislation that created the FETC.

There are currently 42 county probation departments that authorize probation and parole officers to carry a firearm in the performance of their duties. Approximately 1,000 officers have been certified to carry a firearm and they are required to annually complete both range and classroom instructions in order to be certified. The authority to carry a firearm and to be certified to do so is currently grounded in both statute and policy. It is the position of CCAPPOAP that the operational policy needs to be in regulatory form to be mandatory thereby requiring that the very important directives and mandates of the FETC be followed by all applicable county probation departments rather than a select few.

CCAPPOAP represents the county chief probation officers and I am the Chief Probation Officer in Dauphin County; in other words, we are the regulated community to whom these regulations would apply. The regulations that are currently being considered by Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) will apply to the county probation departments who carry firearms, including my county. CCAPPOAP has been involved in reviewing and informally commenting on these regulations through every step of the process and fully supports the implementation and promulgation of the regulations. However, unfortunately, I have been advised that the IRRC staff is going to recommend rejection of the proposed regulations. I have discussed this issue with our Association's Executive Board and in light of our Association's involvement in the development of the FETC and these regulations, we fully support adoption of the regulations and passage as soon as possible. I strongly encourage you to override any recommendations from your staff that these regulations not be approved and finally promulgated.

Sincerely,

Michael Potteiger
President
CCAPPOAP