

Law enforcement group wants outside review of State Police



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

State Police Headquarters in Framingham.

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)

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A local group of active and retired law enforcement personnel is calling recent reform efforts at the scandal-plagued Massachusetts State Police “inadequate” and pushing Governor Charlie Baker to create an independent oversight panel.

“Every effort must be made to restore the reputation of this agency,” the Massachusetts Association for

Professional Law Enforcement said in a statement. “The failure to do so will have devastating effects on the safety and security of our citizens and permanently erode confidence in one of the state’s most vital police agencies.”

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The organization, also known as [MAPLE](#), consists of about 35 current and former law enforcement members and criminal justice educators, including active and retired State Police.

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The state’s largest law enforcement agency has been rocked by [controversies over the past year](#), including allegations that officers in the highest ranks ordered the illegal altering of official documents and a wide-ranging overtime fraud scheme in which [five troopers pleaded guilty](#).

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The agency’s mishaps have become highly politicized leading up to the Nov. 6 election.

Baker’s office on Thursday highlighted a [series](#) of [reforms](#), including [hiring](#) auditing firm Ernst & Young to examine the department’s payroll practices.

“Governor Baker continues to work with Colonel [Kerry] Gilpin to implement reforms to increase

transparency at the State Police,” spokeswoman Sarah Finlaw said in a statement.

State Police spokesman David Procopio also said improvements are afoot.

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“Colonel Gilpin, her command staff, and key personnel she has promoted to important positions have a laser focus on making improvements and changes to the department’s operations to restore public trust in the department,” Procopio said.

Meanwhile, state lawmakers recently allocated funds for new recruits, as well as money for a special unit within the Inspector General’s office to examine State Police.

The law enforcement veterans at MAPLE believe the proposed reforms are too narrow in scope and lack transparency and external input.

MAPLE president Dennis Galvin, who retired as a major from the State Police in 2003, said the group wants “a totally independent review of the State Police.”

“And we want open dialogue,” Galvin said. “We want it done out in the public.”

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The group’s proposal calls for the creation of a “blue-ribbon commission,” a panel of nationally-recognized law enforcement experts with no ties to the state’s political establishment, to conduct a top-to-bottom review of the agency.

The commission should publish its findings, which should serve as the blueprint for reform, Galvin said. He said similar commissions have been used to overhaul police agencies following corruption scandals. Baker’s office and State Police declined to say if they support a commission.

Emalie Gainey, spokeswoman for Attorney General Maura Healey, said Healey supports the reforms initiated by Baker and State Police, but is interested in learning more about MAPLE’s proposal.

Gainey said Healey, whose office is leading a state criminal probe into trooper fraud, believes it is important to consider additional reforms.

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