

**Testimony of Michael O’Neil  
Executive Director, Vermont Troopers’ Association  
Before the House Judiciary Committee  
In Support of H.342: An Act Relating to Protecting the Personal Information of Certain  
Public Servants**

**March 11, 2025**

Chairman Lalonde, Vice Chair Burditt, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Michael O’Neil, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Vermont Troopers’ Association, which represents the Troopers and Sergeants of the Vermont State Police. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.342, legislation that takes an essential step toward safeguarding Vermont’s public servants, including members of the Vermont Troopers’ Association (VTA), from threats, harassment, and violence enabled by the disclosure of their personal information.

Every day, Vermont’s law enforcement officers, judges, prosecutors, and other public servants place themselves at risk in order to fulfill their duties to the communities they serve. Unfortunately, in the digital age, their exposure to threats extends far beyond physical encounters. The unregulated access and distribution of personal information by data brokers pose a severe and growing danger to these individuals and their families. This bill provides a necessary measure of protection by requiring data brokers to cease disclosing the protected personal information of public servants upon request.

**The Need for Enhanced Protections**

The role of law enforcement inherently involves engaging with individuals who may have criminal intent, violent histories, or grievances against the justice system. In recent years, we have witnessed an alarming increase in targeted harassment and even physical attacks against officers and their families due to their personal information being readily available online. This is not a hypothetical risk—it is a present danger that must be addressed.

By allowing public servants to remove their personal information from public databases, this bill acknowledges that the privacy, safety, and security of those who enforce and uphold the law are fundamental to the continued function of our justice system and government operations.

**Balancing Privacy and Public Interest**

H.342 does not impede the public’s right to transparency or accountability in government operations. Instead, it strikes a necessary balance—ensuring that the personal addresses and contact details of public servants are not used as tools of intimidation or violence. The negligible public value of this personal information is far outweighed by the risks associated with its accessibility.

The ability of officers to perform their duties without undue fear for their personal safety is essential not only for their well-being but also for the effective enforcement of Vermont's laws. Ensuring that they can do their jobs without undue concern for the safety of their families fosters a more stable, resilient law enforcement community.

### **Conclusion**

For these reasons, the Vermont Troopers' Association strongly supports H.342 and urges the committee to advance this legislation. Protecting those who serve and protect Vermont's communities is not just a legislative necessity—it is a moral obligation.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this critical issue. I would be happy to answer any questions the committee may have.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael O'Neil  
Executive Director  
Vermont Troopers' Association