



# CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT

*BUREAU OF POLICE*

**Investigations Division Commander**

## **NOT JUST ABOUT REGISTRATION**

Many people are reading articles in the local newspaper and wondering what is going on. The administration has been trying to get the message out to the citizens we serve however, this has become extremely difficult as we constantly have to clear hurdles or agendas of others who misinterpret or are misinformed about our intentions.

For the last month many people have focused on the “registration” portion of the proposed ordinance. As the person who has spent a year putting this together and studying our cities crime issues, I can state without hesitation that the “registration” portion is just a very small minute portion. In no way does the administration believe that by making Landlords register their tenants that crime will instantly be solved or deterred.

It is the other portions of this ordinance that are backed by years of data witnessed by history that WILL be a difference maker in our city. Many people are worried that the information collected through the “registration” portion of the ordinance will be subject to right to know. Let me be clear on this, it is not subject to RTK and the city will not release this information. This subject has been challenged to the Supreme Court level and has been upheld.

If our citizens have been paying attention to the articles in the newspaper regarding our most recent violence it is clear that there is a common thread. The people who have perpetuated these crimes were not on the lease however; were staying with individuals who were on the lease. The police department is called to these incidents and conducts an investigation. The police department identifies all individuals who are present. Many times during these investigations it is crystal clear that the person on the lease was intimately aware of the criminal activity that was, is, or did take place.

We are not saying that the Landlord will be charged with the crimes being committed at their properties. However: it is extremely important to understand this point, the tenant at these locations can and should be held accountable when it is proven that they have proven intimate knowledge of the criminal activity that they or their guests are involved in and they allow

it to occur. This is where the landlord comes in. Through communication, we can provide information to the landlords to inform them that there is a problem at one of their rentals. Most landlords will welcome this information and WILL act on the information in an effort to protect their investment and our city. However, there are SOME who will ignore this information and REFUSE to do anything to protect their investment and our city. These are the individuals who have cause for concern. For it is these individuals who are bringing your property values down, and allowing YOUR neighborhoods to deteriorate due to their DEFIANCE and obvious lack of concern for our city's safety and well being.

This ordinance is more than "registration". This ordinance is a crime prevention tool that when applied properly can and will reduce crime in our city. As I have stated before there are three things needed in order for a crime to occur, a victim, an offender, and a place or location. Given that all the data and facts tell us that we have an exorbitant amount of crime occurring at rental properties our strategy is to focus on the location or place. For it is at the location where the victim and offender meet. The landlord is the individual with the most control over their tenants who harbor these individuals who could fall into either category as being victim or offender. If we can eliminate just one of these elements we can eliminate or prevent a crime from occurring in our city. This is CRIME PREVENTION and we all as responsible Americans and citizens have a duty to prevent crime and protect the members of our community from harm.

Captain Timothy S. Miller

THIS MESSAGE IS APPROVED BY MAYOR GABRIEL CAMPANA