



WAYNE E. BENNETT
SUPERINTENDENT

**NEW YORK STATE POLICE
BUILDING 22
1220 WASHINGTON AVE.
ALBANY, N. Y. 12226-2252**

LETTER OF COMMENDATION

November 17, 2004

Trooper Steven M. Kelley
New York State Police - "E"
Waterloo, New York 13165

Dear Trooper Kelley,

It has come to my attention that on September 26, 2004, at about 6:10 am, you received an alarm from Bruce Austic's farm on State Route 96 in the Town of Covert. Upon arrival you observed a vehicle parked near the Anhydrous Ammonia tank with a subject pumping the product into a large drum. The suspect then jumped into his vehicle and upon exiting the driveway, the drum containing the Anhydrous Ammonia fell off the back of the truck and spilled onto the ground. A pursuit ensued on State Route 96 southbound and then on several county roads for approximately eight miles until you lost sight of the vehicle. Moments later a Seneca County Deputy observed the vehicle, initiated a second pursuit which continued into Schuyler County where he was finally stopped by SP Montour Falls patrol. A second subject had fled Austic's farm on foot and a search detail was organized. Several hours later a possible sighting was reported in a nearby cornfield and with the assistance of 1H16 the second subject was taken into custody by you without incident. Interviews of both suspects led to the location of a methamphetamine lab in Chemung County and recovery of a large amount of methamphetamine.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for a job well done. Mr. Austic has been the victim of repeated thefts of Anhydrous Ammonia and although we have attempted surveillance of this tank, set up cameras, and finally an alarm system this is the first time we have been able to identify suspects related to the thefts. Your decision to immediately respond to the alarm was instrumental in apprehending two suspects who were deeply involved in the manufacture of dangerous drugs in our area. Your actions are in keeping with the highest traditions of the New York State Police and the public is safer as a direct result of your actions. Keep up the good work.

Sincerely

Captain Donald T. Swain
Zone II Commander