

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 10, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Commerce, Justice & Science Subcommittee
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Commerce, Justice & Science Subcommittee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Mikulski and Senator Shelby:

As you consider funding levels for this fiscal year, we write to request that you fund the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program at a minimum of \$247 million, the amount requested in the President's FY 2015 budget, in the fiscal year 2015 Commerce, Justice and Science Appropriations bill.

As you know, in recent years, budget constraints have forced many municipalities to either reduce hiring or lay off public safety officers. While fiscal responsibility requires tough budget decisions at every level of government, public safety must not be compromised in the process. The COPS Hiring program represents a fiscally responsible solution to ensure that our communities remain safe; the Brookings Institution found it to be "one of the most cost-effective options available for fighting crime." When officers establish a presence on their patrols, they develop positive relationships with the communities they serve. These relationships in turn increase law enforcement's ability to solve local crimes and resolve public safety problems. Increasing the presence of officers on our cities' streets helps keep at-risk youth away from crime by fostering cooperation and collaboration between law enforcement and community members. This proactive approach to policing prevents crime from occurring, saving taxpayers the high societal costs associated with crime, incarceration and services for victims.

Since its creation, the COPS Office has assisted over 13,000 of the nation's 18,000 jurisdictions with over \$14 billion in funding to hire more than 125,000 additional officers. In FY 2013, COPS Hiring granted \$127.5 million to 266 communities to hire, preserve, or rehire 955 law enforcement officers. In FY 2013, there were heightened restrictions for funding requests leading many communities to forego applications, but of the 1,718 jurisdictions that applied, they requested over \$974 million in funding. Without the restrictions, approximately \$2.9 billion would have been requested. The \$247 million requested is a small fraction of the \$1 billion appropriated by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and less than the \$298 million previously appropriated in FY 2010.

In addition to hiring more officers, the COPS Hiring Program offers innovative programs to enhance the effectiveness of community policing. For instance, the COPS Office provides training and

technical assistance to educate law enforcement officers on community policing best practices. COPS Hiring also provides grants for local agencies to replace obsolete technology, enabling them to efficiently and effectively investigate, respond to, and prevent crime.

We are supported in this request by law enforcement organizations including the Fraternal Order of Police, the Major County Sheriffs' Association, and the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association. We are also supported by the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

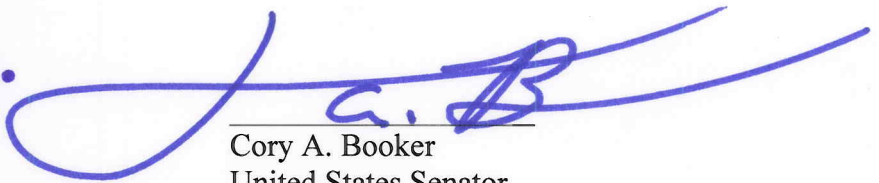
We appreciate the hard work and leadership that you have shown on these issues. Ongoing crime and violence in our cities continue to demonstrate the vital need for increased police protection in our communities. Therefore, as you determine the funding levels for this program, we ask that you support funding for the COPS Hiring Program at the highest possible level.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

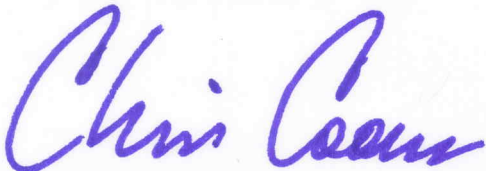
Sincerely,



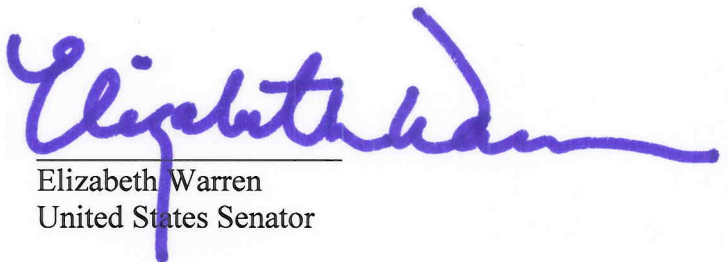
Robert Menendez
United States Senator



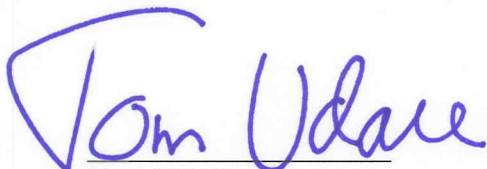
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Tom Udall
United States Senator



Carl Levin
United States Senator



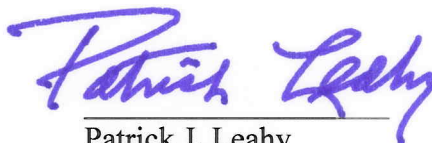
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



John D. Rockefeller, IV
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



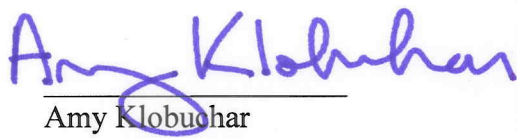
Patrick J. Leahy
United States Senator



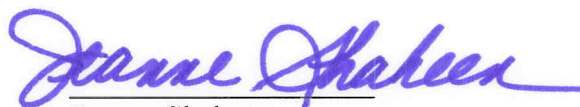
Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Kay R. Hagan
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



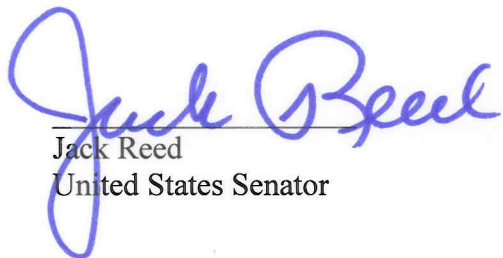
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



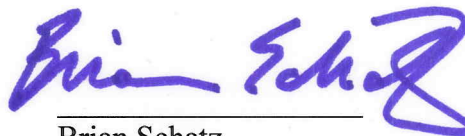
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



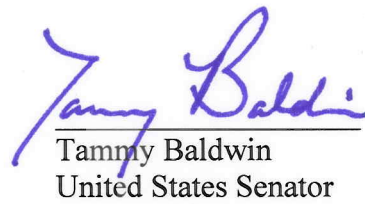
Jack Reed
United States Senator



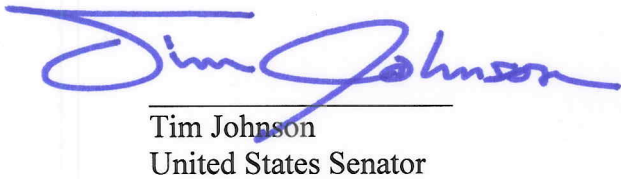
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



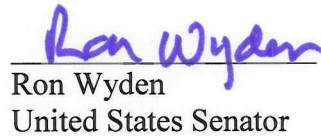
Christopher Murphy
United States Senator



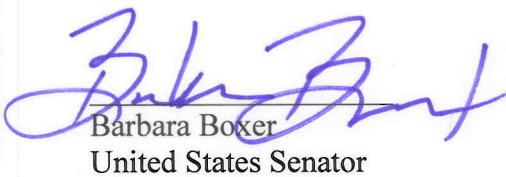
Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



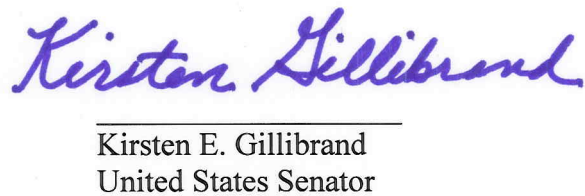
Tim Johnson
United States Senator



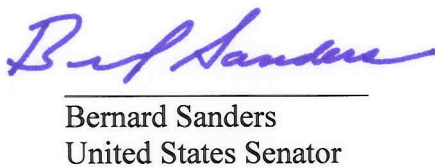
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



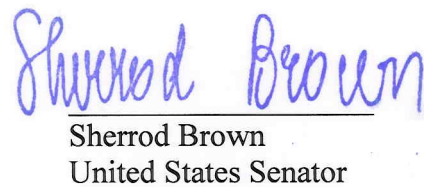
Barbara Boxer
United States Senator



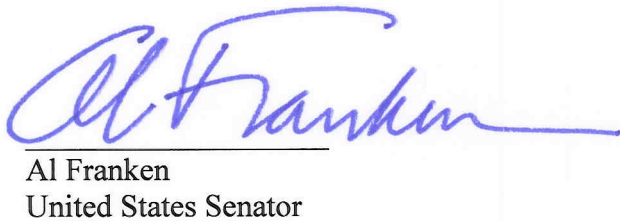
Kirsten E. Gillibrand
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



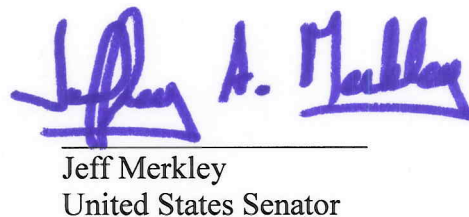
Al Franken
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



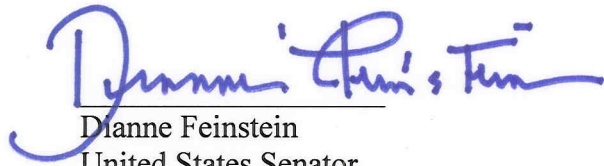
Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator



Jeff Merkley
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator