April 9, 2019

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Commerce, Justice, & Science Subcommittee  
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
Vice Chairwoman  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
Commerce, Justice, & Science Subcommittee  
506 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Shaheen:

As you consider funding levels for Fiscal Year 2020, we urge you to fund the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program at a minimum of $400 million.

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 using community policing principles, they can develop positive relationships with the communities they serve. In turn, these relationships increase law enforcement’s ability to solve local crimes and resolve public safety problems. 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 16,000 jurisdictions with over $14 billion in funding to hire approximately 129,000 additional officers. As you know, the opening of the COPS Hiring Program grant solicitation is on hold due to the issuance of a nationwide injunction by a U.S. District Court on April 12, 2018. Nonetheless, this program plays an essential role in our federal government’s support for local law enforcement and should therefore receive the highest possible level of funding. The COPS Office received more than 1,100 CHP applications during the FY 2017 open solicitation period from law enforcement agencies in every state and US territory. After careful review of all applications, the COPS Office made FY 2017 CHP awards to 179 state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies totaling $98,495,397 to support the hiring of 802 full time law enforcement officers. Clearly, the program is in high demand and unable to meet that demand even at current levels.

We are supported in this request by law enforcement organizations including the Fraternal Order of Police, National Association of Police Organizations, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the Major Cities Chiefs Association. 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,
Tim Kaine  
United States Senator

Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator

Robert P. Casey Jr.  
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator

Angus S. King Jr.  
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

Jack Reed  
United States Senator

Tom Udall  
United States Senator
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Doug Jones
United States Senator

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

Jon Tester
United States Senator

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

Tina Smith
United States Senator

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator
Ron Wyden
United States Senator

Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator