

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 18, 2017

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

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Vice Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Commerce, Justice & Science Subcommittee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Shelby and Senator Shaheen:

As you consider funding levels for Fiscal Year 2018, we urge you to fund the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program at a minimum of \$194.5 million, the amount appropriated for the program in FY 2017. 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 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.

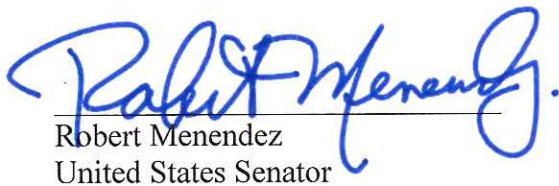
Since its creation, the COPS Office has assisted over 13,000 of the nation's 16,000 jurisdictions with over \$14 billion in funding to hire approximately 129,000 additional officers. In FY 2016, the COPS Hiring Program granted \$119 million to 184 law enforcement agencies to hire, preserve, or rehire 918 full-time law enforcement officers. There were heightened restrictions for funding requests in FY 2016, leading many communities to forego applications, but still over 3,300 officers were requested, representing over \$411 million in funding. Without the restrictions, over 7,000 officers would have been requested, representing over \$1.6 billion in funding. The \$194.5 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.

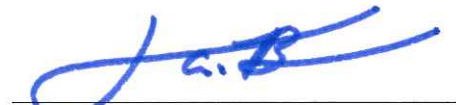
We are supported in this request by law enforcement organizations including the Fraternal Order of Police, National Association of Police Organizations, Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, Major Cities Chiefs Association, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police. We are also supported by the United States 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.

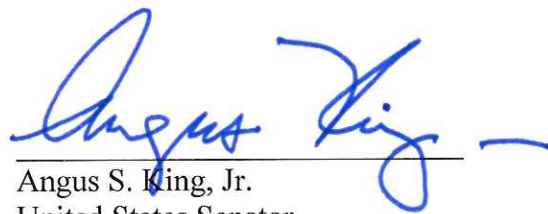
Sincerely,



Robert Menendez
United States Senator


Cory A. Booker
United States Senator


Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator

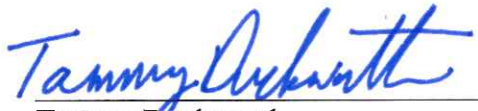

Tom Udall
United States Senator


Brian Schatz
United States Senator

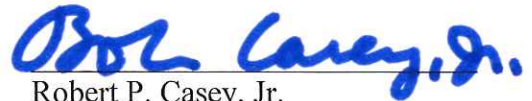

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator


Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

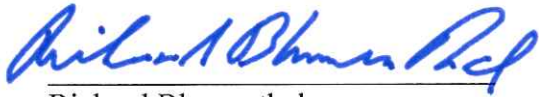

Al Franken
United States Senator



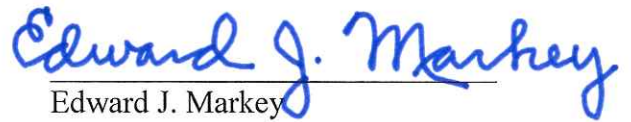
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



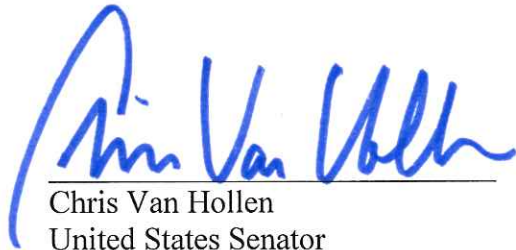
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



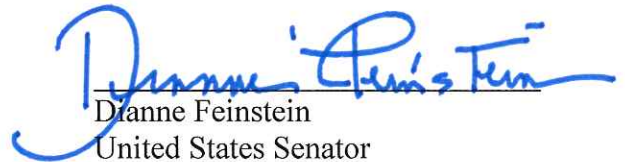
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



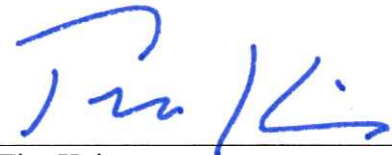
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator




Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



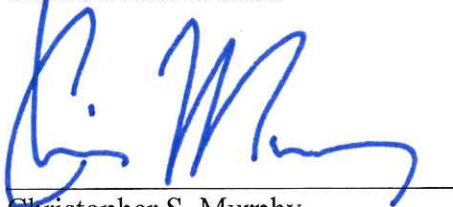
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



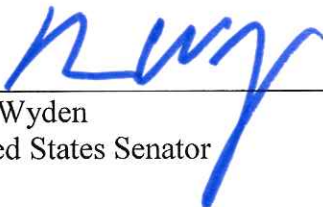
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator




Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



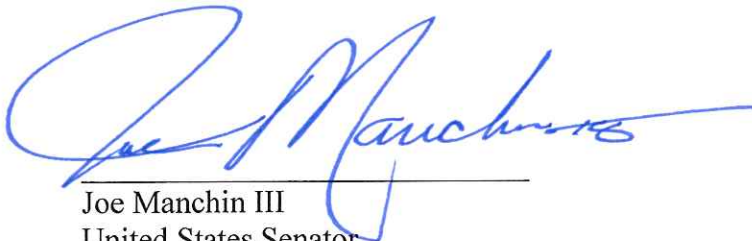
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



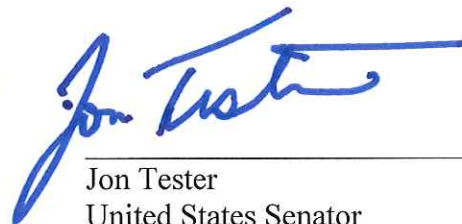
Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



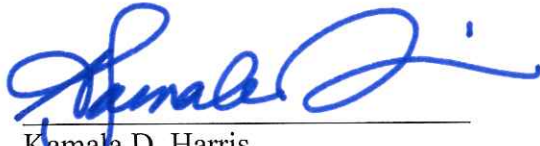
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



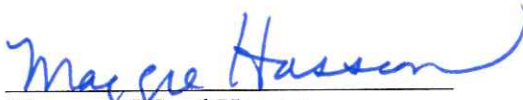
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator