



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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CHUCK CANTERBURY
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JAMES O. PASCO, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

8 June 2018

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy P. Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin O. McCarthy
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
Minority Whip
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker and Representatives McCarthy, Pelosi and Hoyer,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to address our concerns with H.R. 5952, the appropriations measure which funds the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies. The bill as reported would terminate the independence of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and make this vital component of our national policing strategy just another grant program under the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA).

The cornerstone of our national crime-fighting strategy is community policing. For the last 25 years, the COPS Office has served as the flagship of this effort. In addition to the critical hiring program, the COPS Office also administers a variety of assistance programs. The National Blue Alert Coordinator is in the COPS Office, as is the recently established grant program to train State and local law enforcement officers in active shooter response. The recently enacted Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act will be implemented by the COPS Office and will no doubt build upon the research and results they have had to date as part of their Officer Safety and Wellness program. In just the past few years, Congress, with the support of the FOP and the law enforcement community, has seen fit to establish these new programs under the purview of the COPS Office, and with good reason.

Unlike most Federal programs providing assistance to State and local law enforcement, the COPS Office has cultivated and maintained excellent partnerships with officers in the field. The office and its staff draw on real world experience as many are former law enforcement officers themselves. The officers in the field know this and the COPS Office enjoys their full confidence and trust. The COPS Office is a brand and to subjugate the office to BJA would anonymize it

and, ultimately, will erode that trust and subsequently its value to the men and women in law enforcement.

On behalf of the more than 335,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I strongly urge the House to maintain the COPS Office as an independent entity within the Justice Department. It has a proven record of success and there is no benefit to law enforcement by shuffling a successful program like COPS into BJA. Thank you as always for your leadership and consideration of our members' views. If I can be of any further assistance on this or any other issue, please do not hesitate to contact me or my Senior Advisor, Jim Pasco, in my Washington office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chuck Canterbury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "C" at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail that loops back under the name.

Chuck Canterbury
National President