



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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PATRICK YOES
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

JIM PASCO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1 April 2025

The Honorable Todd W. Blanche
Deputy Attorney General of the United States
U.S. Department of Justice
900 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Deputy General Blanche,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to express our concerns regarding the potential impact of the responses to your memo entitled "Soliciting Feedback for Agency Reorganization Plan and RIF." One of the potential outcomes of this reorganization would be the termination of the independence of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), making this vital component of our national policing strategy into just another grantmaking program under the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA).

The cornerstone of our national crime-fighting strategy is community policing. For more than 30 years, the COPS Office has served as the keystone of this strategy. 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 an established grant program to train State and local law enforcement officers in active shooter response. The COPS Office administers the programs created by Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) which has had a tremendously positive impact of the health and wellness of America's law enforcement officers. The LEMHWA program augments the Supporting and Treating Officers in Crisis (STOIC) Act by providing family support services to law enforcement personnel as well as suicide prevention services.

Most recently, Congress enacted the Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act and established it under the purview of the COPS Office 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 of its past leaders were law enforcement officers. The officers in the field know this and the COPS Office enjoys their full confidence and trust. We appreciate any initiative that streamlines grant programs, but the COPS Office is a brand and is the only entity whose sole mission is to serve the needs of State and local law enforcement. To subjugate the office to BJA or combine it with other programs would anonymize it and ultimately erode that trust and subsequently its value to the men and women in law enforcement.

-- BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION --



I urge you to take our concerns to heart as you make decisions about efforts to reorganize the Justice Department to better serve the American people and make our communities safe. I also request that before embarking on major changes at the Department that will have an immediate impact on State and local law enforcement that you work with the National FOP and allow us to provide our perspective about the needs of the field and how a rejuvenated Justice Department can help them execute their public safety mission.

On behalf of the more than 377,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I strongly urge that the COPS Office be maintained 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 just another grant program within the bureaucracy. Thank you as always for your leadership and consideration of our members' views on this topic. If I can be of any further assistance on this or any other issue, please do not hesitate to contact me or Executive Director Jim Pasco, in our Washington office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Yoes", with a large, stylized initial "P" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Patrick Yoes
National President

