

CALL TO ACTION

by National Fraternal Order of Police

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Since the enactment of the FY2011 spending bills in February, the FOP has been working with our allies on Capitol Hill to build support for the Federal programs of greatest interest to our nation's law enforcement officers: the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) program, the hiring program administered by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and the State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). You can read National President Canterbury's letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Appropriations concerning the cuts here <http://www.fop.net/publications/archives/letters/2011_0712_CJS.pdf>

The FOP and its partners in the law enforcement community have faced tough opposition, not just from historical opponents of the COPS Office, but also from politicians more interested in cutting programs than crafting policy. Last week, the House Appropriations Committee favorably reported a draft version of the Fiscal Year 2012 appropriations measure for the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies. The draft bill completely eliminates funding for the COPS Office and SCAAP, and imposes deep and unreasonable cuts to the Byrne-JAG program.

The current draft eliminates the hiring program administered by the COPS Office, which the FOP has identified as one of the most successful and vital programs assisting State and local law enforcement. The COPS Program has made more than \$13.5 billion in awards-including \$7.5 billion through its hiring program to advance the policy community policing nationwide. The COPS Program's awarding more than 42,400 community policing grants have added more than 100,000 police officers to our streets and funded more than 13,600 State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. Community policing has been a key component of our nation's crime-fighting strategy for nearly two decades and, as a result, we have the lowest crime rates in our history. Reducing budgets at the cost of reducing public safety is not sound public policy and the FOP urges that the COPS Office and the grant programs it administers continue to be part of our national strategy.

To find out if your agency received COPS funding last year, please visit

<http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=2296>

In addition, the draft legislation drastically and disproportionately reduces funding for the Byrne-JAG program, which has been cut sixteen percent below FY2011 levels and thirty percent below FY10 levels. The Byrne-JAG program is the cornerstone of our national crime prevention and crime-fighting strategy, enabling communities to target resources to their own needs.

Critical collaboration occurs among local, State and Federal law enforcement agencies through multi-jurisdictional drug task forces using Byrne-JAG funds, enabling law enforcement agencies to join together in targeting regional drug trafficking organizations, gangs and other public safety threats.

To find out if your jurisdiction received funding through Byrne-JAG last year, please visit <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grant/11jagallocations.html>

The draft legislation also cuts funding for SCAAP, which provides Federal payments to State and local governments for the incarcerations of persons illegally present in the United States who have committed other serious crimes. The Federal government has asserted quite forcefully that the enforcement of immigration law is the province of the Federal government and has made the deportation of dangerous criminal aliens a priority. It is at variance with common sense and abhorrent to public policy to burden State and local agencies with costs directly associated with these alien offenders.

To find out if your agency or jurisdiction received funding last year, please visit http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grant/scaap_site.html

The FOP will continue to work with our allies in Congress to ensure that these programs receive adequate funding for FY2012. But your Senators and Representatives need to hear from you. We need you to call your Members of Congress and urge them to support you, and your State and local law enforcement agencies by ensuring that these programs are funded in FY2012.

Tell them:

* The COPS program has been a critical component of the fight against crime for nearly 20 years. During this time, crime rates have dropped to historic lows. Fewer officers on the street mean more crime in our communities.

* Byrne-JAG monies help keep vital anti-drug, anti-gang and other multi-jurisdictional task forces operating. Criminals do not respect jurisdictional boundaries, and Byrne-JAG programs help law enforcement agencies cooperate against public safety threats.

* Enforcing Federal immigration law is a Federal responsibility, but State and local agencies are often forced to hold criminal aliens at their own cost, draining resources which could be better used in the community. The SCAAP reimburses State and local agencies for shouldering this Federal responsibility

To find out who your representatives are as well as their contact information, please visit: www.house.gov <<http://www.house.gov/>> and www.senate.gov <<http://www.senate.gov/>>