April 1, 2019

The Honorable José Serrano
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
H-310 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholdt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
1203 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Serrano and Ranking Aderholdt,

Thank you for your ongoing and diligent efforts to appropriately rebalance limited resources in order to support our nation’s highest priorities. As you begin to craft the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriation bill for Fiscal Year 2020, we respectfully urge you to include sufficient funding for the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) Program and the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) programs -- in particular, the COPS Hiring program. These programs are critical to ensuring that state and local law enforcement have the tools, programs, personnel and resources necessary to protect and serve their communities, including in efforts to prevent further gun violence and help stem the opioid epidemic.

The Byrne JAG and COPS programs are the cornerstone of our federal justice assistance programs. Since their inception, the Byrne JAG and COPS programs have enabled law enforcement agencies to form vital partnerships among communities and law enforcement officers, combat criminal activities, and develop and implement problem-solving and crime prevention programs nationwide.

The strength of the Byrne JAG program is in its impact across the criminal justice system, from law enforcement to prosecution and courts, crime prevention and education, corrections and community corrections, drug treatment and enforcement, program planning, evaluation, technology improvement, and crime victim and witness initiatives.

The COPS Office and its corresponding programs provide invaluable resources and technical assistance to state and local law enforcement agencies, keeping our communities safe. Sufficient funding is critical to ensuring that law enforcement has the resources necessary to effectively and efficiently protect the public, because in recent years law enforcement agencies have experienced shrinking budgets and difficult decisions concerning operational readiness and number of officers on patrol.

We appreciate the difficulty you face in appropriating adequate resources for the programs under your jurisdiction and we thank you for your work. Support for the Byrne JAG and COPS Hiring
programs is imperative to the safety of our communities. These programs supplement the manpower and incentivize collaboration across agencies necessary to build upon successful crime reduction efforts of the past twenty years. For these reasons, we respectfully request that you include strong funding for the Byrne JAG and COPS programs, especially the COPS Hiring program, in the FY2020 CJS appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress

John Rutherford
Member of Congress

Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress

Rick W. Allen
Member of Congress

Kelly Armstrong
Member of Congress

Cindy Axne
Member of Congress

Andy Barr
Member of Congress

Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress

Ami Bera
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Donald S. Beyer Jr.
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Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress

André Carson  
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Suzanne Bonamici  
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Bradley Byrne  
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Elijah E. Cummings  
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Brian Fitzpatrick
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Denny Heck
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Jim Himes
Member of Congress

Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress

Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress

William R. Keating
Member of Congress

Trent Kelly
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

Peter T. King
Member of Congress

Steven Horsford
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

Bill Johnson
Member of Congress

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Trent Kelly
Member of Congress

Joseph P. Kennedy, III
Member of Congress

Daniel Kildee
Member of Congress

Steve King
Member of Congress
Adam Kinzinger
Member of Congress

Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
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Barbara Lee
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Daniel W. Lipinski
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney
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Reja Krishnamoorthi
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James R. Langevin
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John B. Larson
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John Lewis
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Tom Malinowski
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Sean Patrick Maloney
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