



# Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

April 2, 2004

Honorable Frank Wolf  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Justice, and State, the Judiciary,  
and Related Agencies  
House Appropriations Committee

Honorable Jose Serrano  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce,  
Justice, and State, the Judiciary,  
and Related Agencies  
House Appropriations Committee

Dear Chairman Wolf and Ranking Member Serrano,

We are writing to express our deep concern regarding the large cuts in Department of Justice law enforcement assistance programs requested in the President's FY 2005 budget. Three important programs, the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program, the Local Law Enforcement Block Grant (LLEBG) Program, and the Edward Byrne Memorial Grant Program will be cut dramatically if the President's proposed budget is passed.

Each of these grant programs have been crucial in assisting local law enforcement agencies to increase their capabilities and improve their overall effectiveness. The COPS Program was funded in FY 2004 at \$756 million. This President's request is only \$97 million, an 87% cut. The Byrne program was funded in FY 2004 at \$659 million and the LLEBG at \$225 million, for a combined sum of \$884 million. The President's budget would combine these two programs under the new Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program at a proposed funding level of \$508 million, a cut of 43%. Altogether, this represents a total cut in DOJ programs for local law enforcement of 63% from FY 2004 levels.

The administration argues that Department of Justice cuts are compensated by Homeland Security Department (DHS) increases. This is simply not true. DHS makes available law enforcement assistance funds, through the State Homeland Security Grant (SHSG), Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program (LETPP), Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), and State and Local Training Programs (SLTP). However, the President's FY 2005 budget asks for only \$2.733 billion for these four programs, 16% below the previous year's funding of \$3.268 billion.

The DOJ programs target needed aid for what is still the primary job of local law enforcement, to protect and serve the public. We respectfully request that the COPS program be funded at least at last year's \$756 million, and that the new JAG Program be funded at \$884 million, also equal to FY 2004 funding. Underfunding these important programs will undermine our police departments and make our citizens less safe.

Sincerely,

Loetta Sanchez

Jack Quinn

Guy T. Costello

Alman P. Ortiz

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Rosa L. J. Lee

Barney Frank

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