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COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
DEFENSE SUBCOMMITTEE
TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING, AND URBAN
DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

TIM RYAN
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
13TH DISTRICT, OHIO

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

January 24, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

As a Member of Congress, I am deeply concerned about news reports stating that your administration could be considering the elimination of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). I implore you to reject any such effort to eliminate this vital program.

Since its inception in 1995, the COPS Office has been the primary source of federal investment for more than 13,000 police departments nationwide. The COPS Hiring Program assists law enforcement agencies seeking to hire entry level officers, and has made it possible for 129,000 officers - including many military veterans - to remain on the force. In my home state of Ohio, 648 local and state law enforcement agencies have directly benefited from funding, and 224 school resource officers have been hired to ensure every student has a safe environment in which to learn.

Moreover, Ohio leads the nation in opioid-related overdose deaths. Fortunately, the COPS Anti-Heroin Task Force Program and the COPS Anti-Methamphetamine Program provide critical support to state police agencies as they pursue traffickers of heroin, prescription opioids, and methamphetamine. Eliminating these much-needed grant programs would be an enormous blow to state efforts to fight the opioid epidemic. As Co-Chair of the Congressional Addiction, Treatment and Recovery Caucus, I have a responsibility to speak out against cuts to programs that could save lives.

Finally, the COPS Community Policing Development Program aids community engagement efforts through funding for training and materials, technical assistance, applied research, and the development of innovative policing strategies and best practices. In Ohio, state and local law enforcement agencies have used these grants to hire an additional 4,074 police officers and sheriff's deputies to engage in community policing activities and crime prevention. Rebuilding the trust between communities and law enforcement will do much to advance public safety, and the elimination of this program would be a betrayal of this national priority.

You have publicly stated your commitment to stand up for our law enforcement community, empower our law enforcement officers to do their jobs, and support their mission of protecting

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the public. You have also stated the belief that “our country needs more law enforcement, more community engagement, and more effective policing.” As your administration works to prepare a budget, I hope it will keep these commitments in mind as it decides the future of COPS grants. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim Ryan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tim Ryan
Member of Congress