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June 1, 2015

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: FY 2016 COPS Hiring Program Grant Funding

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing on behalf of the League of California Cities (League) to urge you to support funding for the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program in the upcoming FY 2016 Senate Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations bill. The COPS Hiring Program provides critical funding for California cities and local law enforcement agencies for the hiring or retention of police officers.

Currently, the House CJS Appropriations bill eliminates funding for the COPS Hiring Program. Furthermore, the bill proposes restructuring some programs administered through the COPS Office by transferring them to other agencies within DOJ. At a time when our local law enforcement agencies need the most attention, removing this funding stream will undermine the efforts we are making to improve public safety and rebuild trust in our law enforcement.

Last year, California jurisdictions were awarded grants totaling \$17,685,664 through the COPS Hiring Program. With these funds, the California's local law enforcement agencies were able to hire 116 officers. In addition to providing key funding, programs through the Department of Justice's COPS Office further assist law enforcement agencies through training and technical assistance.

COPS Office programs provide invaluable support for law enforcement. We greatly appreciate your willingness to fight for cities and to support critical funding for public safety. As the Senate Appropriations CJS Subcommittee considers its appropriations bill, we urge you to reject the language included in the House version and at a minimum maintain current funding levels for the COPS Office programs.

Thank you for your attention to the concerns of California cities on this critical funding request. Please contact me or the League's Washington advocate, Leslie Pollner, at (202) 469-5149 with any questions. We look forward to continuing to work with you on California's important local priority issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris McKenzie".

Chris McKenzie
Executive Director