



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

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October 14, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray
Co-Chair, Joint Selection Committee on
Deficit Reduction
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling
Co-Chair, Joint Selection Committee on
Deficit Reduction
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Murray and Representative Hensarling:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), representing 241,000 rank-and-file police officers from across the United States, I would like to express our concerns regarding the debt reduction debate and our strong support for the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program.

Over the past 17 years, local law enforcement officers and the agencies they serve have made tremendous strides in reducing the level of crime and violence in our communities. This success was in large part due to the generous assistance and support given by the federal government through the COPS program to help hire and train new officers as well as retain experienced officers.

As state and local law enforcement take on more duties to protect our communities from rising crime and terrorist threats, federal support of this vital assistance program is critical. The COPS Office has funded the addition of nearly 117,000 officers and has awarded over 40,000 grants to policing jurisdictions across the United States. While this may seem like a high number, the need for COPS Hiring is an even greater priority.

This year alone we have seen a spike in law enforcement fatalities, while there are even more law enforcement lay-offs as a result of state and local budget shortfalls. When considering the COPS Hiring program one must also take into account the safety of the thousands of rank-and-file officer who put their lives on the line.

NAPO is also mindful of the current efforts to reduce the nation's budget deficit. The decisions that the deficit panel must consider cannot come lightly. This is why we respectfully ask that you keep in mind the importance of COPS Hiring program. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, or NAPO's Director of Government Affairs, Rachel Hedge, at (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,



William J. Johnson
Executive Director

cc: Members of the Deficit Panel
NAPO President, Tom Nee