



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

*Representing America's Finest*

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June 5, 2025

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**WILLIAM J. JOHNSON, CAE**

Executive Director and  
General Counsel

The Honorable Pamela J. Bondi  
Attorney General of the United States  
United States Department of Justice  
900 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Madam Attorney General:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO) and the approximately 250,000 sworn law enforcement officers we represent across the country, I am writing to thank you for showing strong support for state and local law enforcement assistance programs in your Fiscal 2026 budget request. Adequately funding the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program, the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant Program, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program, the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program, and the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant Program will help America's law enforcement keep our streets safe.

We do want to reiterate our concern over the proposed future of the COPS Office as laid out in the President's FY 2026 Budget request and advise you of our longstanding and solid support for the program and its importance to our nation's law enforcement community.

While we understand and support making the Department's grantmaking authorities more streamlined and efficient, we fear that if the COPS Office is consolidated with the other grantmaking entities within the DOJ, we will lose a significant, dedicated resource.

Serving as the lead national law enforcement organization, NAPO worked tirelessly with members of Congress and the Administration to enact the COPS Program in 1994. Since its inception, the COPS Program has been extremely successful in implementing and carrying out its designated objectives. A big part of the success of this program is its reliance on local law enforcement agencies in defining what their communities need and meeting those needs.

The COPS Office is the only office within the Department solely dedicated to the needs of state and local law enforcement. COPS leadership and staff have built close relationships with state and local law enforcement agencies and representatives, and it is known for its accessibility and responsiveness to stakeholders and grantees. It is a trusted office within the Department that over the past 30 years has become an essential partner to the law enforcement community.

COPS initiatives to put and maintain more officers in the field promote community policing, fight crime, and improve officer safety and wellness and should be continued and supported as part of an independent COPS Office.

Further, we were disappointed to see the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Body Worn Camera Grant Program zeroed out in the FY 2026 Budget. NAPO strongly supports the use of body worn cameras as long as officers are allowed to view the footage prior to making a statement or writing a report. The majority of body worn camera footage exonerates officers, and they have been an important tool in improving relationships between police and the communities they serve. The BJA Body Worn Camera Toolkit supports the grant program and includes in its recommendations that officers be allowed to view the camera footage before making an oral or written statement. We urge you to support Congress continuing to appropriate funding to this important program.

NAPO hopes that you will help America's law enforcement keep our streets safe by safeguarding and continuing the successful, independent COPS Program. If you have any questions about the importance of maintaining an independent COPS Office or if we can provide any assistance, please feel free to contact me at (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William J. Johnson', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

William J. Johnson  
Executive Director