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## HOW CONGRESS CAN IMPROVE ITS FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

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The law enforcement funding proposals in President Bush's budget for fiscal year (FY) 2003 were intended to eliminate duplicative and ineffective programs that have no proven effect on reducing crime. However, the Commerce, Justice, and State (CJS) appropriations bill that has emerged from the Senate (S. 2778) ignores the Administration's intent and undermines its efforts to improve the safety of America's neighborhoods. Further, continuing to spend tax dollars on such wasteful programs as Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) only adds to the Office of Management and Budget's projected deficit of \$109 billion for FY 2003.

In crafting their version of the CJS appropriations bill for 2003, Members of the House of Representatives now have an opportunity to reverse the Senate's counter-productive policy. The House should ensure that the President's proposals for law enforcement funding are recognized and incorporated in its legislation—specifically, the elimination of funding for ineffective hiring grants in the COPS program and the consolidation of duplicative and inefficient grant programs into one Justice Assistance Grants (JAG) program that should award funds competitively on the basis of performance and merit.

**Eliminating COPS Hiring Grants.** The Community Oriented Policing Services program was created in 1994 to reduce crime by putting 100,000 additional officers on America's streets. Yet research by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), the U.S.

General Accounting Office, and The Heritage Foundation has found that the program has failed even to come close to that goal, despite \$10 billion in funding from FY 1994 to FY 2002. A 2000 DOJ report, the *National Evaluation of the COPS Program*, projected that the number of officers COPS would place on the streets would peak at around 46,000 to 57,000 in 2001—only half of the program's purported goal.

In 2001, The Heritage Foundation's Center for Data Analysis (CDA) conducted an independent analysis of the COPS program's effectiveness. After accounting for yearly state and local law enforcement expenditures and other socioeconomic factors, the CDA analysis found that neither COPS grants for hiring additional police officers nor those for redeployment (Making Officer Redeployment Effective grants) had a statistically significant effect on reducing the rates of violent crime.

While it has been shown that police initiatives can reduce crime if they are guided by a clear plan to target resources at a specific problem, simply

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spending more federal dollars to put more officers on the streets has proved to be an ineffective and inefficient use of resources. COPS hiring grants have failed and should be eliminated. At a time of heightened concern about the security of the nation's communities, these funds should be employed in initiatives that will have greater impact and accountability.

**Consolidating Duplicative Grant Programs.**

According to the Office of Management and Budget, there is virtually no evidence that either Local Law Enforcement Block Grants (LLEBGs) or Byrne formula and discretionary grants have been effective in reducing crime. Moreover, both of these crime prevention grant programs lack adequate measures of performance. The Administration has proposed consolidating the funds that have gone to these duplicative and inefficient grant programs into one \$800 million Justice Assistance Grants program that would place greater emphasis on measuring performance.

Byrne discretionary grants are a prime example of where reform is needed. Based on the recommendations in S. Report 107-218, 99.95 percent of the \$94 million in funding for Byrne discretionary grants will be earmarked for programs and will not be awarded on a competitive basis. The Senate sets aside a paltry \$46,000 in Byrne discretionary grant funding that can be awarded on the basis of merit

and likely performance. Rather than being earmarked and, thus, in jeopardy of being used as political chits, these funds should be awarded competitively on the basis of program effectiveness. Both of the reforms suggested for the grant process—consolidating duplicative grants and measuring performance—represent sound public policy and should be incorporated in Congress's 2003 CJS appropriations bill.

**Conclusion.** To enhance the impact of every taxpayer dollar that is spent on crime reduction and law enforcement, Congress and the Administration should continually review programs, reduce funding for those that are ineffective, and consolidate duplicative programs into a single channel for grants that would enhance accountability and effectiveness. Congress should redirect the funding of any program that has been unproductive—especially at a time when the budget is strained and the need for security heightened.

These maxims should guide Members of Congress to incorporate the President's proposals for reform in law enforcement funding as the House develops its 2003 CJS appropriations bill and as the House and Senate Committees meet in conference on their bills.

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