

February 3, 2009

## **NAPO UPDATE: COPS HIRING FUNDS IN THE STIMULUS BILL**

The House and Senate versions of the stimulus bill, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (H.R. 1 and S. 336), include \$1 billion dollars for the COPS hiring program. The Senate bill, S. 336, eliminates the 75% cap for the program, saving states and localities from the 25% match for the costs of hiring an officer for 3 years. Although H.R. 1 does include the cap, NAPO has been assured that in the final, compromise version of the bill the cap will be eliminated.

NAPO continues to work with House and Senate appropriators to have language placed in the bill that will allow COPS hiring funds to be used for officer retention. On Monday, February 2, NAPO met with staff from the Senate appropriations committee to discuss this issue. We were told that Senator Mikulski, Chairman of the Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittee, supported our efforts; however, with the fast movement of the bill, it could be difficult to put language into it that would dramatically alter how the COPS hiring program distributes funds. Currently, the hiring program is tightly structured so that funds can only go for the hiring of police officers.

The appropriations' committee staff said that for now, language would be placed in the bill that would allow for the funds to be used to re-hire officers that had been laid off, and that they are looking into seeing if the stimulus bill can be used to change the COPS program to allow for hiring funds to be used for officer retention.

Currently, the Byrne-JAG program, which receives roughly \$3 billion in both H.R. 1 and S. 336, is the only program that allows funds to be used for the retention of officers if the department can prove that the officer would be fired if these funds were not made available to them.

The House passed H.R. 1 on January 28, 2009. The Senate is currently debating S. 336 and looks to vote on the bill this week, after which the House and Senate will go into conference to work out the differences between H.R. 1 and S. 336. Congress has a self-imposed deadline of passing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act by President's Day.

**If your department is experiencing layoffs, or if your local government is threatening to fire police officers in order to close budget gaps, please email Andy Mournighan, NAPO's Director of Governmental Affairs, at [amournighan@napo.org](mailto:amournighan@napo.org).** The more specifics NAPO has on what police departments across the country are facing, the stronger our argument is to Congress on being able to use COPS hiring funds for retention.

If you have any questions or would like more information on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, please feel free to contact Andy at (703) 915-9454 or [amournighan@napo.org](mailto:amournighan@napo.org)