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March 26, 2018

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Sessions:

I was encouraged by the U.S. Department of Justice's recent announcement that it will use its discretion to shift as much money as possible into the COPS hiring program and to prioritize applicants that intend to use the funding to hire additional School Resource Officers (SROs).

In speaking to local law enforcement and Superintendents throughout my community, they have assured me that increasing the number of SROs on school campuses is the single most important thing we can do to help them improve school safety. Sadly, in my congressional district there is currently insufficient funding to provide at least one SRO on every school campus. I promised to fight for federal funding to help off-set these costs, and I believe the COPS hiring program is a valuable mechanism for achieving that goal. With the budget bill signed into law last week, Congress has authorized an additional \$75 million in funding for DOJ School Safety grants for the remainder of this fiscal year. I implore you to once again utilize your discretionary authority and use these funds to expand the COPS hiring program, particularly for large districts serving more than 50,000 students, as they face a significant burden in trying to hire enough SROs for every campus.

Again, thank you for your leadership on this very important issue. We all want to ensure that every child has a safe and secure learning environment. I appreciate your consideration of my request.

Respectfully,



Gus M. Bilirakis
Member of Congress