

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 23, 2016

The Honorable John Culberson  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
Room H-310, The Capital  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Honda  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science and Related Agencies  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Honda:

We respectfully request that you fully fund the President's Fiscal Year 2017 budget request for Department of Justice grants to be used for the purchase of police body-worn cameras. We ask that you provide funding at the Administration's requested levels for the following programs: \$30 million for the Body-Worn Camera Partnership Program, and \$20 million for Smart Policing Initiatives, of which \$10 million would be used for the Body-Worn Camera Demonstration Program.

The Body-Worn Camera Partnership Program provides matching grants to state, local, and tribal governments that cover up to half the cost of purchasing the technology. Under the Program, grantee agencies are required to make a 50 percent matching contribution. The Body-Worn Camera Demonstration Program, a purpose area of the Smart Policing Initiative, provides grants to state, local, or tribal law enforcement agencies in an effort to ensure body-worn cameras are used in an efficient, effective, and economical manner.

The American public and national police organizations alike widely support the use of body-worn cameras and the accountability and transparency the technology brings. Body-worn cameras are important tools that improve officer interactions with the public, de-escalate conflicts, reduce crime, and improve public trust in law enforcement. Yet only 32 percent of the nation's 12,000 local police departments provide at least some officers with body-worn cameras.

Many more police agencies, both large and small, are committed to adopting the technology and are seeking the necessary funds to do so. In 2015, 285 agencies from 42 states applied for federal funding, requesting a total of \$56 million for the purchase of more than 55,000 cameras. While the Justice Department was able to grant awards to 73 of the applicants for a total of 21,000 body-worn cameras, we can and should provide more resources to increase dramatically their use throughout the country.

Fully funding these grant programs will make it easier for law enforcement agencies to afford body-worn cameras and related technology, and is a critical step that Congress can take to help mend police-community relations and improve the safety of cities and towns across America.

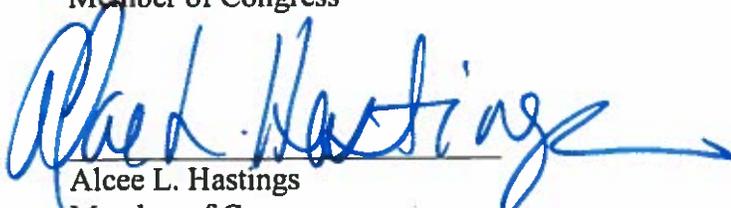
Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress

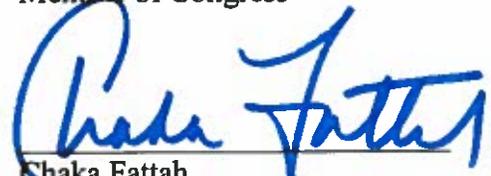
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Adam Smith  
Member of Congress

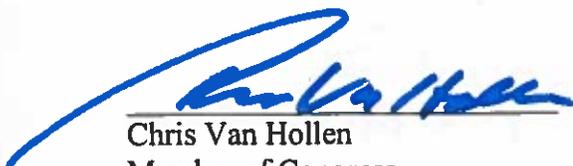
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Alan Grayson  
Member of Congress

  
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Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress

  
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Barbara Comstock  
Member of Congress

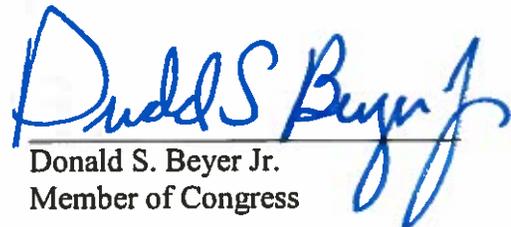
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chaka Fattah  
Member of Congress

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chris Van Hollen  
Member of Congress

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Curt Clawson  
Member of Congress

  
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Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress

  
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Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



Elijah E. Cummings  
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Gregory W. Meeks  
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Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress



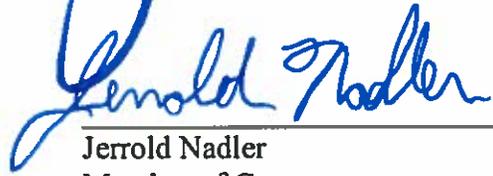
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



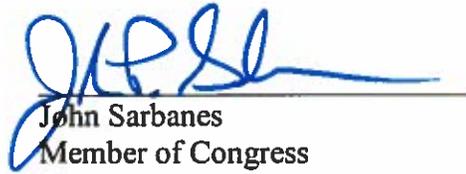
Janice Hahn  
Member of Congress



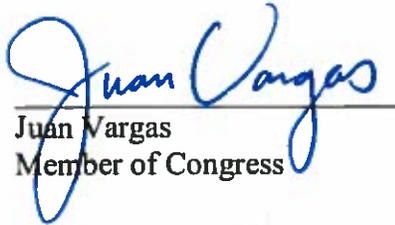
Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress



John Sarbanes  
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



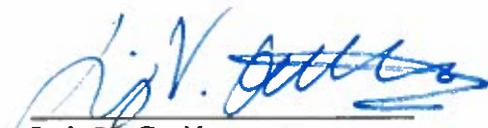
Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



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Lloyd Doggett  
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Luis V. Gutiérrez  
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Marc Veasey  
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*Yvette D. Clarke*

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