



*INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE*

# TESTIMONY

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**Statement of**

**Edmund Mosca**

**Legislative Committee Chairman  
International Association of Chiefs of Police**

**Before The**

**Committee on the Judiciary**

**United States House of Representatives**

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[WWW.THEIACP.ORG](http://WWW.THEIACP.ORG)

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman:

My name is Ed Mosca and I am Chief of Police in Old Saybrook, Connecticut. I also serve as the Chairman of the International Association of Chiefs of Police Legislative Committee.

As you may know, the IACP is the world's oldest and largest police organization. Founded in 1893, the IACP's current membership exceeds 22,000 law enforcement executives in 100 countries.

The IACP has been, and continues to be, a strong supporter of the COPS Program and the COPS Office. Since its inception in 1994, the COPS Program, and the community policing philosophy it fosters, has been very successful in helping law enforcement agencies throughout the nation reduce crime rates and maintain safer communities. That is why we are so pleased to be here today to express our strong support for H.R. 1700, the COPS Improvement Act. The COPS Improvement Act will, if enacted, allow us to build upon and extend the success of the COPS Program.

When the COPS Program was fully funded almost a decade ago, communities throughout the nation witnessed a remarkable decline in the rate of crime. Years of innovative and effective efforts by federal, state, tribal and local law enforcement agencies enabled us to transform our neighborhoods from havens of fear to safer, more secure communities.

I can speak from personal experience about the value and the benefit that COPS Program provided local police departments. In the 1990s the COPS Program made a profound impact on the ability of my department to protect the citizens we serve. I was able to hire additional officers, purchase equipment and provide training that would have otherwise been out of reach for a smaller department like mine. I was also able to establish a highly successful and acclaimed School

Resource Officer program, which provided a practical level of security within our school system. As a result of this assistance, my officers were better equipped, better trained and better positioned to fulfill their mission on a daily basis.

However, the success of the COPS Program is not derived solely from the amount of federal assistance funds that have been made available to state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies, but also to the manner in which the program has operated. The key to the success of the COPS Program is that it works with the individuals who best understand the needs of their states and communities: state and local law enforcement executives. By adopting this approach, the COPS Office ensures that the right funds are provided to the correct agencies to address appropriate needs.

Yet, despite the best efforts of our nation's law enforcement officers, the disturbing truth is that each year in the United States, well over a million of our fellow citizens are victims of violent crime. Unfortunately, in the last two years we have seen a steady increase in the rate of violent crime in the United States. According to the FBI Uniform Crime Report, violent crime rose at a rate of 2.5 percent during 2005. To put that in perspective, that is an additional 31,479 victims.

This increase in the crime rate appears to be accelerating. For the first six months of 2006, the crime rate rose at a rate of 3.7 percent, when compared to the same time frame in 2005. If this rate holds for the final six months, and I am sorry to say that I believe it will, it would mean that an additional 47,000 Americans found themselves victims of violent crime.

While there are many different theories as to why violent crime is increasing in communities after years of often double-digit declines, there is one fact that all can agree upon: no place is immune. What were once considered "urban"

problems—drug addiction and distribution, violent crime, gangs, and poverty—have migrated to suburban and even rural locations.

Further, for violent crime in general, cities with populations 25,000 to 50,000 are seeing the fastest growing incidents. From 2004 through the first six months of 2006, the violent crime rate in these communities rose by more than 8 percent. In towns with populations from 10,000 to 25,000 the homicide rate went up more than 6.5 percent over the same two-year period.

It is telling that this increase in crime in America, violent and otherwise, corresponds to the substantial decline in funding for local and state law enforcement from federal government assistance programs.

I will not use my time here this afternoon to enter into a prolonged discussion of the current budget situation confronting law enforcement but I would ask that I be able to submit a copy of the IACP's Budget Analysis for the record

I do believe it is important to note that when compared to the FY 2002 funding level of \$3.8 billion, the Administration's FY 2008 proposal represents a reduction of more than \$3.2 billion or 85 percent and no program has been hit harder than the COPS Program.

It is for these reasons that the IACP is such a strong supporter of the COPS Improvement Program. By reauthorizing and expanding the mission of the COPS Program, this legislation will ensure that the COPS Program continues to serve and assist the state and local law enforcement community.

The IACP believes that the COPS Program played an integral role in our ability to reduce crime rates in the past. By providing law enforcement agencies with the necessary resources, training and assistance, the COPS Program has become an invaluable ally to state and local law enforcement agencies. It is this fact that

makes the current situation completely unacceptable, not only to the nation's entire law enforcement community, but also to the citizens we are sworn to protect. It is an undisputed reality: state, tribal, and local law enforcement agencies are on the front line of effective terrorism prevention. Because of their 24/7, 365 days a year efforts to prevent and combat crime and violence, state, tribal, and local law enforcement officers are uniquely situated to detect, investigate, apprehend and hopefully prevent suspected terrorists from acting.

For five and half years, law enforcement agencies and officers have willingly made the sacrifices necessary to meet the challenges of fighting both crime and terrorism. They have done so because they understand the critical importance of what they are sworn to do, and they remain faithful to fulfilling their mission of protecting and serving the public. However, the expenditure of resources necessary to maintain this effort has left many police departments in a financial situation so dire that their ability to provide the services their citizens expect and deserve has been threatened and, in fact, diminished.

This must not and cannot continue. If our efforts to reduce crime and promote homeland security are to have any chance of succeeding, it is absolutely vital for Congress and the Administration to make the necessary resources available that will allow America's first line of defense—law enforcement—to mount successful effective anticrime programs, which are also effective antiterrorism programs.

The IACP urges Congress to approve quickly the COPS Improvement Act and to ensure that it and other vital state and local law enforcement assistance programs are full funded.

This concludes my statement. I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.