



NATIONAL FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE®

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CHUCK CANTERBURY
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

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27 June 2017

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy P. Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin O. McCarthy
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
Minority Whip
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Speaker and Representatives McCarthy, Pelosi and Hoyer,

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Fraternal Order of Police to reiterate the FOP's opposition to any amendment or piece of legislation that would penalize law enforcement agencies by withholding Federal funding or resources from law enforcement assistance programs in an effort to coerce a policy change at the local level. The House will consider H.R. 3003 on the floor this week and Section 2 of this bill would restrict the hiring program administered by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne-JAG) programs, as well as programs administered by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

The FOP has been very clear on this issue: we strongly believe that local and State law enforcement agencies should cooperate with their Federal counterparts. That being said, withholding needed assistance to law enforcement agencies—which have no policymaking role—also hurts public safety efforts.

Local police departments answer to local civilian government and it is the local government which enacts statutes and ordinances in their communities. Law enforcement officers have no more say in these matters than any other citizen and—with laws like the Hatch Act in place—it can be argued they have less. Law enforcement officers do not get to pick and choose which laws to enforce, and must carry out lawful orders at the direction of their commanders and the civilian government that employs them. It is unjust to penalize law enforcement and the citizens they serve because Congress disagrees with their enforcement priorities with respect to our nation's immigration laws.

— BUILDING ON A PROUD TRADITION —

AILA Doc. No. 17062832. (Posted 6/28/17)

The FOP issued a statement in January of this year regarding the approach of the Administration on sanctuary cities as outlined in President Trump's Executive Order. The President recognized that it is unfair to penalize the law enforcement agencies serving these jurisdictions for the political decisions of local officials. It allows the U.S. Attorney General and Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to make an informed decision about the public safety impact without an automatic suspension from Federal grant programs. In Section 2 of H.R. 3003, there is no such discretion and it countermands the Administration's existing policy.

The FOP opposed several bills in the previous Congress, which were outlined in a letter to the Senate leadership, and we will continue to work against proposals that would reduce or withhold funding or resources from any Federal program for local and State law enforcement. If Congress wishes to effect policy changes in these sanctuary cities, it must find another way to do so.

On behalf of the more than 330,000 members of the Fraternal Order of Police, I want to urge the House to reject H.R. 3003's punitive approach and work with law enforcement to find a better way to improve public safety in our communities. Please feel free to contact me or my Senior Advisor Jim Pasco in my Washington office if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chuck Canterbury", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chuck Canterbury
National President