

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6973

To permit COPS grants to be used for the purpose of increasing the compensation and hiring of law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 11, 2024

Mr. LALOTA (for himself, Ms. SPANBERGER, Mrs. KIM of California, and Ms. PEREZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To permit COPS grants to be used for the purpose of increasing the compensation and hiring of law enforcement officers, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “COPS on the Beat
5 Grant Program Reauthorization and Parity Act of 2024”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The President’s Task Force on 21st Cen-
9 tury Policing highlighted the importance of hiring

1 law enforcement officers who reflect the diversity
2 and values of the community, and who have both the
3 mindset and the skills needed to engage with the
4 community.

5 (2) Diverse workforces can be more effective,
6 creative, and resilient than homogenous workforces,
7 and teams with broader perspectives result in better
8 decision-making and problem-solving practices. Re-
9 cruiting a diverse pool of candidates includes quali-
10 fied individuals from different races, genders,
11 ethnicities, and cultural backgrounds.

12 (3) Effective law enforcement recruitment prac-
13 tices can help engender trust, develop good relations
14 with their communities, and ensure that the officers
15 they hire can best serve those communities. Recruit-
16 ment efforts should start in the community, and law
17 enforcement agencies should consider developing
18 youth programs to attract younger generations. This
19 could include Explorer programs, internships
20 through local schools, cadet academies, university
21 partnerships, and youth mentorship programs that
22 foster relationships between young adults and de-
23 partments. Not only do these programs develop en-
24 thusiasm for a law enforcement career, they can also

1 build relationships between law enforcement agencies
2 and the communities they serve.

3 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
4 gress that the COPS Office is uniquely suited to empower
5 local law enforcement agencies to fulfill recommendations
6 related to law enforcement hiring practices, including
7 agencies being reflective of the communities they serve,
8 both demographically and in values and vision, and pos-
9 sessed the mindset and skills needed to engage with the
10 community.

11 **SEC. 3. REAUTHORIZATION OF COPS ON THE BEAT GRANT**
12 **PROGRAMS.**

13 (a) REAUTHORIZATION OF COPS ON THE BEAT
14 GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 1001(a)(11)(A) of title I of
15 the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968
16 (34 U.S.C. 10261(a)(11)(A)) is amended by striking “for
17 each of fiscal years 2006 through 2009” and inserting
18 “for each of fiscal years 2025 through 2034”.

19 **SEC. 4. RURAL COMMUNITY ACCESS TO COPS GRANTS.**

20 (a) USES OF GRANT AMOUNTS.—Section 1701(b) of
21 title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act
22 of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10381(b)) is amended—

23 (1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through
24 (23) as paragraphs (4) through (24), respectively;

1 (2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the fol-
2 lowing:

3 “(3) in the case of any State or unit of local
4 government that has a median household income of
5 less than 70 percent of the national median house-
6 hold income and qualifies for a reduced contribution
7 under subsection (g)(2), to increase wages of career
8 law enforcement officers to not more than 80 per-
9 cent of the national median household income;”;

10 (3) in paragraph (23), as redesignated, by
11 striking “through (21)” and inserting “through
12 (22)”.

13 (b) PREFERENTIAL CONSIDERATION.—Section
14 1701(c) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe
15 Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10381(c)) is amended—

16 (1) by striking paragraph (1); and

17 (2) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as
18 paragraphs (1) and (2), respectively.

19 (c) COST SHARE.—Section 1701(g) of title I of the
20 Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34
21 U.S.C. 10381(g)) is amended to read as follows:

22 “(g) MATCHING FUNDS.—

23 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-
24 graph (2), the portion of the costs of a program,
25 project, or activity provided by a grant under sub-

1 section (a) may not exceed 75 percent, unless the
2 Attorney General waives, wholly or in part, the re-
3 quirement under this subsection of a non-Federal
4 contribution to the costs of a program, project, or
5 activity. In relation to a grant for a period exceeding
6 1 year for hiring or rehiring or increasing the com-
7 pensation of career law enforcement officers, the
8 Federal share shall decrease from year to year for
9 up to 5 years, looking toward the continuation of the
10 increased hiring and compensation level using State
11 or local sources of funding following the conclusion
12 of Federal support, as provided in an approved plan
13 pursuant to section 1702(c)(8).

14 “(2) REDUCED NON-FEDERAL CONTRIBU-
15 TION.—

16 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The portion of the
17 costs of a program, project, or activity provided
18 by a grant under subsection (a), in any State
19 or unit of local government described in sub-
20 paragraph (B), may not exceed—

21 “(i) 90 percent for the first year of
22 the grant;

23 “(ii) 85 percent for the second year of
24 the grant;

1 “(iii) 80 percent for the third year of
2 the grant; and

3 “(iv) 75 percent for the fourth year of
4 the grant.

5 “(B) STATE OR UNIT OF LOCAL GOVERN-
6 MENT DESCRIBED.—A State or unit of local
7 government described in this subparagraph is
8 any State or unit of local government—

9 “(i) with a median household income
10 that is not more than 80 percent of the na-
11 tional median household income;

12 “(ii) that does not provide a single
13 employee with compensation that is more
14 than double the national median household
15 income; and

16 “(iii) that is a rural State, rural com-
17 munity, or rural area as such terms are
18 defined in section 40002(a) of the Violent
19 Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act
20 of 1994 (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(26)(A)) is
21 amended.”.

22 (d) LIMITATION ON HIRING AND REHIRING.—Sec-
23 tion 1704(c) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and
24 Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10384(c)) is amended
25 to read as follows:

1 “(c) HIRING AND COMPENSATION COST.—

2 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Funding provided under
3 this part for hiring or rehiring a career law enforce-
4 ment officer may not exceed \$75,000, unless the At-
5 torney General grants a waiver from this limitation.

6 “(2) REDUCED CONTRIBUTION.—In the case of
7 a jurisdiction that qualifies for a reduced contribu-
8 tion under section 1701(g)(2), a career law enforce-
9 ment officer who is hired or rehired or whose com-
10 pensation is increased under this part may not re-
11 ceive from any funding provided under this part
12 compensation exceeding 80 percent of the national
13 median household income for work performed as an
14 on-duty law enforcement officer.”.

15 (e) ALLOCATION OF COPS GRANT PROGRAM
16 FUNDS.—Section 1001(a)(11)(B) of title I of the Omni-
17 bus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34
18 U.S.C. 10261(a)(11)(B)) is amended by inserting after
19 the second sentence the following: “If funds remain avail-
20 able for obligation under this subparagraph in a fiscal year
21 after all eligible and qualified grantees have been funded
22 from the 50 percent of funding allocated for grants pursu-
23 ant to applications submitted by units of local government
24 or law enforcement agencies having jurisdiction over areas
25 with populations exceeding 150,000 or by public and pri-

1 vate entities that serve areas with populations exceeding
2 150,000, the remaining funds may be used for grants pur-
3 suant to applications submitted by units of local govern-
4 ment or law enforcement agencies having jurisdiction over
5 areas with populations 150,000 or less or by public and
6 private entities that serve areas with populations 150,000
7 or less.”.

8 (f) DEFINITIONS.—Section 1709 of title I of the Om-
9 nibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34
10 U.S.C. 10389) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
11 lowing:

12 “(8) ‘Attorney General’ means the Attorney
13 General, acting through the COPS Director.”.

14 **SEC. 5. COPS OFFICE.**

15 Section 1701(a) of title I of the Omnibus Crime Con-
16 trol and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10381(a))
17 is amended to read as follows:

18 “(a) THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLIC-
19 ING SERVICES.—

20 “(1) IN GENERAL.—There is within the Depart-
21 ment of Justice, under the general authority of the
22 Attorney General, a separate and distinct office to
23 be known as the Office of Community Oriented Po-
24 licing Services (referred to in this subsection as the
25 ‘COPS Office’).

1 “(2) DIRECTOR.—The COPS Office shall be
2 headed by a Director who shall—

3 “(A) be appointed by the Attorney Gen-
4 eral; and

5 “(B) have final authority over grants
6 under this part and any other grants, coopera-
7 tive agreements, and contracts awarded by the
8 COPS Office.”.

9 **SEC. 6. GAO REPORT.**

10 In fiscal year 2029 and fiscal year 2034, the Comp-
11 troller General of the United States, after consultation
12 with the Attorney General, shall submit to Congress and
13 make publicly available a report that provides national
14 averages and averages for department characteristic sub-
15 groups including at least size of police and sheriff depart-
16 ments and urban or rural designations by jurisdiction de-
17 tailing—

18 (1) a measure of how representative the exist-
19 ing workforce of the average police and sheriff de-
20 partments is to the community served based on de-
21 mographics which include at least gender and race;

22 (2) the percentage of those employed by the av-
23 erage police and sheriff departments that live in the
24 jurisdiction in which they are currently employed;

1 (3) a measure of average officer pay in police
2 and sheriff departments compared to cost of living
3 in the jurisdiction in which they are currently em-
4 ployed; and

5 (4) legislative and administrative recommenda-
6 tions for improving the percentage of officers that
7 live in the jurisdiction in which they are employed
8 and how representative the law enforcement agency
9 is of the community it serves.

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