



July 27, 2022

The Honorable Jared Huffman
U.S. House of Representatives
1527 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Rep. Huffman:

I am writing to thank you for supporting H.R. 1368, the *Mental Health Justice Act of 2021* and request that you consider supporting H.R. 6375, which reauthorizes the COPS program, as well as supporting H.R. 6448, the *Invest to Protect Act*. These bills align with the City's 2022 Federal Platform – Public Safety priorities.

Like many other communities across the country, Santa Rosa Police Department, which has a sworn staff of 181 police officers, has experienced significant police officer hiring and recruitment challenges. For example, one of the City's 2021 police officer recruitment class yielded zero successful applicants.

H.R. 6448, the *Invest to Protect Act*, would establish a grant program to help police departments, like Santa Rosa PD, with fewer than 200 law enforcement officers receive the resources and support they need to keep their communities safe. The bill would allow Santa Rosa to use COPS funding to invest in de-escalation training for law enforcement officers; training for law enforcement officers in handling situations of domestic violence; law enforcement officer safety training; the offsetting of overtime costs associated with scheduling issues when a law enforcement officer is participating in such training; and a signing bonus for a law enforcement officer in an amount determined by the eligible local government.

The *Mental Health Justice Act of 2021* will also provide resources to help develop programs like, inRESPONSE, which was launched by the City of Santa Rosa in January 2022 to respond to calls in which individuals are experiencing a mental health crisis and are unarmed and do not need a primary law enforcement response. The legislation would provide funding to local governments to hire, employ, train, and dispatch mental health professionals to respond in lieu of law enforcement officers in emergencies, to include in the training for mental health professionals and ensure that individuals are linked with voluntary community-based services and train dispatch staff.

Office of the Mayor
City of Santa Rosa
100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 10
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H.R. 6375 would reauthorize the COPS on the Beat Grant Program, which has not received Congressional reauthorization since 2009. This important funding program through the Department of Justice gives local agencies the ability to hire more police officers. Further, this bill codifies the COPS Office within the Department of Justice and makes this office permanent.

All of our constituents deserve to feel safe and secure in their communities. These bills will provide resources to help Santa Rosa scale up our inRESPONSE program and ensure our law enforcement officials have the resources to improve our public safety response capabilities.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Rogers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Chris Rogers, Mayor