

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2302
April 20, 2023

United States Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
ATTN: Director Hugh T. Clements, Jr.
145 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Director Clements Jr.,

I am writing to you today in strong support of the Shakopee Police Department's application for the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) Program grant. The Shakopee Police Department is requesting \$100,000 to assist in instituting a mental health program for officers and their significant others.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), law enforcement officers report higher rates of burnout, anxiety, depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in comparison to civilians. Approximately 25% of law enforcement officers report at least one suicidal ideation in their lifetime. This increased rate tragically leads to more officers dying by completed suicide than dying in the line of duty.

As noted by the National Institute of Justice, approximately 40% of law enforcement officers tested live with a sleep disorder such as insomnia or obstructive sleep apnea. This is roughly double the estimated rate of civilians who develop these sleep disorders. Heightened stress levels also contribute to poor sleep quality and fatigued officers tend to experience more accidental injuries. Overall, officers who experience sleep issues or disorders have a higher likelihood of dying in the line of duty.

The funding from the LEMHWA Program will assist the Shakopee Police Department in investing in critical mental health resources for officers and their significant others. The department plans to utilize funds to provide classes and seminars that focus on mental health and resiliency, stress management, financial planning, sleep and mental health, and yoga and meditation. Additionally, as only 1 in 5 officers suffering from mental illnesses are likely to seek mental health care services, the department will also expand current mental health practitioner visits for officers to 3 - 5 visits per year. The goal of the program is to provide law enforcement officers and their families with the tools necessary to cope with mental health challenges and the stressors of working in public safety.

The LEMHWA Program would allow the Shakopee Police Department to invest in the wellbeing of its officers by prioritizing mental health supports. I can personally attest to just how hard the Shakopee Police Department works to protect their community every single day after participating in a ride along last fall. I fully support the Shakopee Police Department's application for the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act Program and request that you give their application all due consideration.

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Sincerely,



Angie Craig
Member of Congress