

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

May 24, 2022

United States Department of Justice
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
ATTN: Acting Director Robert E. Chapman
145 N Street NE
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Acting Director Chapman,

I am writing in strong support of the Inver Grove Heights Police Department's application for the COPS Hiring Program grant. Across the United States, law enforcement agencies and local police departments have been facing major workforce shortages. This is no different for the Inver Grove Heights Police Department. To compensate, officers regularly take on more work, longer shifts and less time off to recuperate or rest. The COPS Hiring Program would allow the department to make a major investment in staffing and provide greater security to the city.

Inver Grove Heights is currently experiencing some of the highest Part I crimes in Dakota County. Over the past few years, there has been a major spike in calls. From 2015 to 2021, Inver Grove Heights saw a 64% increase in 911 calls. The average calls per year in 2015 was 19,000 and in 2021 the department handled over 30,400 calls. Inver Grove Heights has the third highest 911 call load in Dakota County and they are listed in the top 20 cities in Minnesota for violent crime. With the current staffing issues the department is facing, they must run two 12-hour shifts to cover the streets.

Through the COPS Hiring Program, the Inver Grove Heights Police Department would be able to bring on an additional 3 police officers in 2023. This opportunity would enable the department to address capacity issues while enabling them to run three 10-hour overlapping shifts. Lack of sleep is one of the biggest contributors to poor mental health among officers and 12-hour shifts greatly cut down on sleep time for officers. The change to overlapping shifts would positively impact the department and community by providing crucial support during the busiest times of the day.

Police officers in Inver Grove Heights are currently dedicating most of their time to answering calls. However, community outreach and engagement are high priority areas for the department. The funding from this opportunity would allow the Inver Grove Heights Police Department to

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2ND DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

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increase staffing and address community needs. With the addition of 3 new officers, the department will be able to dedicate experienced officers to handle livability issues in the community and conduct proactive outreach.

I fully and strongly support the Inver Grove Heights Police Department's application for the COPS Hiring Program. The funding from this program will critically and positively impact the City of Inver Grove Heights and Dakota County. The department has unanimous support from their City Council for this opportunity. I urge you to strongly consider their application.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Angie Craig
Member of Congress