

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

May 17, 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 West St. Paul Police Department's application for the COPS Hiring Program grant. Like many agencies across the country, the West St. Paul Police Department was negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and has faced significant capacity challenges since 2020. The COPS Hiring Program would allow West St. Paul to make a targeted and dedicated investment in hiring for much needed, lifesaving positions.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the West St. Paul Police Department and its officers dedicated a great deal of time to outreach efforts. In 2019 alone, the department conducted over 200 outreach events with thousands in attendance. Due to the pandemic and staffing changes, the department hasn't been able to dedicate the same amount of time to these endeavors. This opportunity would allow the West St. Paul Police Department to enhance trust and legitimacy through community policing initiatives, including community outreach.

Through the COPS Hiring Program, the West St. Paul Police Department would be able to hire an additional three officers starting in 2023. Currently, Dakota County has some of the Highest Part I and Part II crimes in the metro area. The West St. Paul Police Department is responsible for responding to many of these reports and as a result, does not have a great deal of time to invest in outreach. This program would not only allow the department to address capacity issues, but these positions would also assist with call response time and would provide additional support for the department's robust outreach efforts.

The department is working diligently to prioritize community outreach and has over a dozen events scheduled for May 2022. These efforts go a long way to build community trust and the department has full support from the City Council. With the assistance from this opportunity and the hiring of new officers, the West St. Paul Police Department strives to expand upon these efforts while reducing crime rates through partnerships and collaborative efforts.

ANGIE CRAIG
2ND DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

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I fully support the West St. Paul Police Department's application for the COPS Hiring Program. The staffing changes and outreach investments that will be made as a result of this funding will have a major impact on the City of West St. Paul, Dakota County, and the State of Minnesota. I urge you to strongly consider their application.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Angie Craig
Member of Congress