

MEMORANDUM

TO: Law Enforcement

FROM: Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA)

RE: Analysis of the U.S. House Budget Plan to reduce funding for Law Enforcement in Iowa

DATE: May 5, 2011

On Friday, April 15th, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a budget for the upcoming year on a party line vote. The plan sharply reduces the federal government's investments in education and infrastructure – investments that are necessary to ensure our country remains competitive in the global economy and generates jobs in both the short and long term. It makes huge reductions in spending that are largely offset by completely extending the Bush 2001 and 2003 tax breaks, which were targeted towards the very wealthy.

The House budget plan would also significantly reduce funding for state and local law enforcement assistance provided by the Department of Justice by calling for the same cuts proposed in H.R.1, the budget proposal that was put forth by the House, and rejected by the Senate, earlier this year. These cuts would eliminate \$250 million from state and local law enforcement, most significantly impacting the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grants (JAG) program and Community Oriented Police Services (COPS).

Last year, over \$24 million in Byrne grants came to Iowa, supporting jobs for over 90 Iowans who are directly responsible for making our state safer.

In Iowa, Byrne-funded drug task forces:

- Were responsible for over 2,400 felony arrests;
- Dismantled 275 gangs;
- Seized over 8,200 illegal firearms;
- Seized nearly 20,000 kilograms of illicit drugs, like heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine.

In Iowa, COPS grants have funded over 770 police officers and sheriff deputies, and last year funded over 25 police officers on Iowa's streets. If the House budget were to be approved, 15 of these officers would lose their jobs.

During a recovering economy, crime does not stop and we should not abdicate our responsibility to keep our communities safe. Cuts to law enforcement will make our streets less safe and our nation less secure. For FY11, I fought hard to keep the dangerous cuts in H.R. 1 from being enacted and I intend to do the same as we consider FY12 budget proposals.

The measure now comes to the U.S. Senate for consideration.

This budget proposal is an unprecedented assault on middle class Americans who are already struggling to make ends meet. What is particularly egregious is the devastating impact these cuts would have on the safety of Iowa communities, which rely on federal assistance to keep law enforcement officials on the streets. Iowans deserve to know that they can have the peace of mind that comes from residing in a safe community. There is no question that the time has come for tough budget decisions, but the smart way to bring down the deficit is for Congress to pursue a balanced approach of major spending cuts and necessary revenue increases, not by indiscriminately cutting common sense law enforcement funds that keep our families and communities secure.

My full statement on the House budget proposal can be found [here](#).

Rather than a pessimistic budget, which says America can't afford to maintain and rebuild the middle class, I believe we need a budget that creates a better future – one that creates jobs, keeps our promises to seniors, educates our children, and reduces the deficit with smart spending cuts and by asking millionaires and billionaires to pay their fair share.