



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

April 23, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy,

On behalf of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA), I want to thank you for the assistance provided to local law enforcement under the *Families First Coronavirus Response Act* and the *CARES Act*. As our nation continues to grapple with the COVID-19 crisis, local law enforcement remains on the front lines and federal support has been instrumental. As we continue to face the COVID challenge head-on, I want to share our foreseeable challenges and concerns.

COVID-19 has already placed a strain on local budgets and police operations. To date, budgetary constraints have forced several members to cancel academy classes as well as investments like body-worn camera programs. Salaries will be cut, layoffs are imminent, and the recruitment and retention of personnel will undoubtedly remain difficult.

MCCA members have had to make drastic changes to their operations, including procuring new technology, often at significant cost, to continue offering essential services and ensure public safety. Our member agencies continue to respond to calls for service and address upticks in some of the most heinous and violent types of crime, including shootings, domestic violence, and child exploitation, despite segments of their workforce being quarantined.

On behalf of the Chiefs and Sheriffs of the sixty-nine largest law enforcement agencies in the United States, I respectfully request that Congress include the following priorities in future COVID-19 legislation to assist local law enforcement's continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. Funding for PPE and test kits

Albuquerque
Arlington
Atlanta
Aurora
Austin
Baltimore
Baltimore Co.
Boston
Buffalo
Calgary, Canada
Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Chicago
Cincinnati
Cleveland
Columbus
Dallas
DeKalb Co.
Denver
Detroit
Edmonton, Canada
El Paso
Fairfax County
Fort Worth
Fresno
Honolulu
Houston
Indianapolis
Jacksonville
Kansas City
Las Vegas Metro
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Los Angeles Co.
Louisville
Memphis
Mesa
Miami
Miami-Dade
Milwaukee
Minneapolis
Montgomery Co.
Montreal, Canada
Nashville
Nassau Co.
New Orleans
New York City
Newark
Oakland
Oklahoma City
Omaha
Orlando
Ottawa, Canada
Peel Region, Canada
Philadelphia
Phoenix
Pittsburgh
Portland
Prince George's Co.
Raleigh
Sacramento
Salt Lake City
San Antonio
San Diego
San Francisco
San Jose
Seattle
St. Louis
Suffolk Co.
Tampa
Toronto, Canada
Tucson
Tulsa
Vancouver, Canada
Virginia Beach
Washington
Wichita
Winnipeg, Canada
York, Canada

- Factor the needs of law enforcement into the criteria used to determine PPE and test kit allocations from FEMA, the Strategic National Stockpile, and other federal sources
 - Expedite reprogramming requests for Byrne JAG, HSGP, and UASI funding
 - Funding for sanitizing equipment to extend the life of existing PPE
2. Support local law enforcement recruitment and retention efforts
 - Pandemic pay increases and recruitment incentives—that are exempt from pay caps—for frontline local law enforcement
 - Funding for virtual training solutions for both in service and recruit training
 3. Mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on local law enforcement budgets
 - Remove the “local match” portion of federal grants
 - Funding for overtime incurred by local law enforcement to cover staffing shortages
 - Funding for hardware, software, and other equipment necessary for law enforcement to remotely accomplish essential services
 4. Assistance with addressing unique crime trends that have emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic
 5. Resources for law enforcement mental health programs
 6. Ensure any inmate release policy does not threaten public safety and health
 - Conduct an individual assessment prior to releasing any inmate that takes into account the crime(s) committed, criminal history, and proclivity to reoffend
 - Test any inmate who is going to be released for COVID-19

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your support for local law enforcement throughout the COVID-19 crisis. The MCCA looks forward to working with you as we continue to navigate these unique times. Please do not hesitate to contact me at art.acevedo@houstonpolice.org if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,



Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association