

More than 1,100 new officers for Arizona

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today voted to approve the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Improvements Act, which would reinvigorate the COPS program by putting 50,000 additional police officers on the street over the next 5 years, including more than 1,100 officers in Arizona. The bill passed the House with a bipartisan vote of 342 - 78.

"This bill is good news for Arizona, local law enforcement and our communities. It will create or save hundreds of jobs for police officers and provide them with the essential tools and new technology they need to fight crime," said Mitchell. "During these tough economic times, I believe it is vital to provide resources to our local police to keep our neighborhoods safe."

A recent nationwide survey of more than 200 police departments found that 44 percent of police departments surveyed have reported increases in certain types of crime that they believe is a result of the economic downturn. Despite these statistics, over a quarter of law enforcement agencies have reported implementing a hiring freeze for sworn officers, more than half have frozen civilian positions, and roughly a third of agencies have discontinued, reduced in size, or delayed classes for new police recruits. [Source: [Police Executive Research Forum](#), January 27, 2009]

H.R. 1139, the COPS Improvement Act of 2009, authorizes \$1.25 billion a year nationally for COPS hiring grants. It also authorizes \$350 million a year for COPS technology grants and \$200 million a year to hire community prosecutors.

The COPS program was created in 1994 and has led to an increase of nearly 117,000 officers on the beat nationwide from 1995-2005. Through July 2008, Arizona received more than \$265 million and added more than 2,680 police officers. [Source: [U.S. Department of Justice](#)]

COPS is supported by numerous law enforcement organizations, including the National Fraternal Order of Police, National Association of Police Organizations, National Sheriffs' Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Narcotics Officers' Associations Coalition, National District Attorneys Association, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National League of Cities. H.R. 1139 now moves to the Senate.