



## **PRESS RELEASE**

For Immediate Release  
June 25, 2012

Contact: Corey Ray  
(202)514-5328  
(202)532-5578 (Cell)

### **Department of Justice Awards “Vets to Cops” Hiring Grants**

*Grants awarded to hire veterans for law enforcement positions and save public safety jobs threatened by local budget cuts*

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) today announced funding awards to over 220 cities and counties, aimed at creating or saving approximately 800 law enforcement positions. The grants will fund over 600 new law enforcement positions and save an additional 200 positions recently lost or in jeopardy of being cut due to local budget cuts. All new law enforcement positions funded in the COPS 2012 Hiring Program must be filled by recent military veterans who have served at least 180 days since September 11, 2001.

More than \$111 million is being awarded to local public safety agencies across the country. The list of this year’s grantees includes Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, PA; Chicago, IL; Boston, MA; Atlanta, GA; Trenton, NJ; Alameda County and Los Angeles, CA; Akron, OH; and Tacoma, WA. The COPS Office will work with transition centers across the country to connect veterans with the new grant-funded law enforcement opportunities.

“This new opportunity for veterans is a commitment to support those who are coming home from their tour of duty,” said Bernard Melekian, COPS Office Director. “We sincerely hope this effort encourages our veterans to continue to protect and serve the United States through new law enforcement careers.”

The COPS Hiring Program makes grants to state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies to hire or rehire community policing officers. The program provides the salary and benefits for officer and deputy hires for three years.

Along with the pledge to hire military veterans, grantees for the 2012 Hiring Program were selected based on fiscal need and local crime rates. An additional factor in the selection process was each agency’s strategy to address specific problems such as increased homicide rates and gun violence.

“Our mission is to promote public safety through community policing, and that involves applying the resources available to areas with both legitimate need and doable solutions,” stated Melekian. “We also remain focused on helping agencies maintain their level of service by protecting law enforcement positions recently lost or threatened to be cut.”

The COPS Office is a federal agency responsible for advancing community policing nationwide. Since 1995, COPS has awarded over \$12 billion to advance community policing, including grants awarded to more than 13,000 state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to fund the hiring and redeployment of approximately 124,000 officers and provide a variety of knowledge resource products including publications, training, and technical assistance.

For the entire list of grantees and additional information about the 2012 COPS Hiring Program, visit the COPS website at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).

###