**Invest to Protect Act of 2022**

***Senator Catherine Cortez Masto and Senator Chuck Grassley***

The vast majority of law enforcement agencies in the U.S. are smaller than 200 full-time sworn officers—over 90% of departments nationally. These small agencies protect and serve our communities with strained budgets and a growing need for additional training, equipment, and funding. Oftentimes, these small departments can’t compete with larger ones when it comes to grant funding, recruitment, retention, and accessing other critical resources. These resources are key to not only the safety of our officers, but also to ensure that our communities are safe.

The **Invest to Protect Act of 2022** would establish a grant through the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program specifically to help small law enforcement agencies fund needs like training, equipment, mental health support, and recruitment and retention. The bill gives agencies the flexibility they need to spend money where it will have the most impact for their unique circumstances and make meaningful investments in their officers and communities. The bill also requires a grant application process that can be completed within 30 minutes so that small agencies without dedicated grant-writing staff can still access the funding.

The bill would allow grant funding to be used for a wide variety of purposes, including:

1. Officer safety, de-escalation, and domestic violence training, as well as funding to offset overtime pay when officers are in training.
2. Purchasing body-worn cameras, while also funding data storage and security for the footage. The program would assist small departments with privacy and storage standards by providing DOJ-created best practices that can be used in the absence of existing guidance from their local governments.
3. Efforts to recruit new officers, retain existing officers, and fund officers’ tuition for graduate studies in mental health, public health, and social work up to $10,000.
4. Evidence-based mental health services and resources for officers.

The bill limits eligibility to local law enforcement agencies with fewer than 200 sworn officers, as well as tribal law enforcement agencies with fewer than 200 officers. The bill authorizes the use of $50 million per year for five years from the COPS grant program.

Cuts to police budgets do not lead to safer communities, but investments in the professional growth, safety, transparency, and mental health of officers do.

This bill is endorsed by the Fraternal Order of Police and the National Sheriffs’ Association.

Congressmen Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ) and John Rutherford (R-FL) introduced this bill in the House with 39 bipartisan cosponsors.

With questions or to join the bill, please contact Jordan Warner at Jordan\_Warner@cortezmasto.senate.gov or John Schoenecker at John\_Schoenecker@judiciary-rep.senate.gov.