

**UNITED STATES SENATE**  
**Budget Committee Hearing**

**Testimony on “Federal Support to Local Law Enforcement Agencies”**

Submitted by:  
**Sheriff Paul D. Laney**  
**Cass County, North Dakota**  
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Each year the demands on local law enforcement agencies grow. As we enter a time when we are asked to become more involved in all aspects of society, we are also seeing proposed cutbacks in our support from the federal government.

As the protectors of our communities, we are committed to doing whatever it takes to keep our citizens safe. We have law enforcement officers in schools; we are involved in senior programs, neighborhood watch programs, drug awareness programs, youth programs, leadership programs, drug courts and a myriad of safety awareness programs to include Drug Interdictions, Remove Alcohol Impaired Drivers, Seatbelt Blitzes, etc.

We also provide law enforcement officers to federal programs such as the Drug Enforcement Administrations (DEA) Drug Task Force and the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF).

With all of these programs, we are also asked to step up to the plate and take on larger roles in Homeland Security. We are active in development of Buffer Zone Protection Plans (BZPP) for local businesses designated as potential terrorist targets. We develop training and are active in preparing for terrorist attacks on our infrastructure. We are also developing action plans to deal with security at Points of Dispensing (PODS) for the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Strategic National Stockpile through the City Readiness Initiative (CRI).

We do all of this while also providing critical members of our agencies to National Guard units who are regularly being called up and deployed. This puts a strain on our abilities to meet our everyday service needs, much less support the requests put on us from the state and federal government.

The support we receive from the federal government is critical to our success in all of the above mentioned programs. The following federal grant programs assist us daily in serving our communities.

- Byrne/JAG grants- Allow us to participate in Drug Task Forces that attack the ever growing and changing methamphetamine problem.

- Law Enforcement Community Block Grants- These grants allow local law enforcement agencies to identify a critical need and apply funding to meet these needs. This grant assisted our region in 2003 by allowing us to purchase a SWAT Command Post/Transport vehicle. Our team serves a seven county area in Southeastern, North Dakota. These funds benefited an entire region.
- COPS Grants- The COPS grants have allowed so many law enforcement agencies to add additional personnel to meet the demands placed upon us. It has put more law enforcement officers on the streets, in the schools and on state and federal task forces, while allowing local governments the ability to budget over a period of time for the additional personnel.
- Local Law Enforcement Terrorism Grants- These grants have allowed agencies required to respond to terrorist incidents the ability to purchase the proper equipment and training necessary to ensure our personnel are equipped and trained to respond to a terrorist incident.

Local law enforcement has always stepped up when called upon to meet the needs of our citizens. You will never hear from us “We Can’t Do It!” We continually meet the demands asked of us, and we will continue to do so, but we need the partnership and the funding from the federal government to continue to meet these demands. With the proper federal support and our local “Can Do” attitude we will be ready to meet the needs of our region, our state and our country.