



U.S. Representative • 9th CD, New York • Brooklyn-Queens

ANTHONY D. WEINER

Report

More COPS = Less Crime

A Statistical Analysis of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program

Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

Representative Anthony D. Weiner

**Presented by
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Executive Summary

In December 2001, researchers from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and Southwest Texas State University released findings from the most comprehensive analysis ever of the impact of a police presence on crime rates. They reviewed data from more than 6,100 cities and controlled for many factors that influence crime rates including unemployment rates, the percentage of single parent households in an area, the percentage of young people, and local homeownership rates. The results of this study were resoundingly clear: more cops equals less crime. More specifically, the study found that the federal government's Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, which has provided funding to over 12,000 communities for the hiring of more than 113,000 new officers, is directly linked to the historic drop in U.S. crime rates in the 1990s.

The Nebraska/Southwest Texas study boiled the impact of the COPS program down to two simple equations. In cities with populations greater than 10,000, an increase in one dollar of COPS hiring grants per resident led to a decline of 5.26 violent crimes and 21.63 property crimes per

100,000 residents. In addition, an increase in one dollar of COPS innovative grant funding per resident contributed to a decline of 12.26 violent crimes and 43.85 property crimes per 100,000 persons.

Our study expands on these findings, translating them into tangible numbers of crimes prevented. We have taken COPS funding data from fiscal 1994 through fiscal 1999 for cities over 10,000 people and inserted this data into the above equations. Among the key findings:

- Nationwide, 756,319 crimes were prevented as a result of the COPS program.
- Nationwide, 153,428 violent crimes were prevented
- Nationwide, 602,891 property crimes were prevented

We also reviewed funding data for the nation's 500 largest cities and have attached a table which breaks down the number of violent crimes and property crimes prevented by city.

These figures simply confirm statistically what we already knew anecdotally: COPS works -- in cities big and small, urban and rural, north, south, east and west. Now, it's up to Congress to build on this successful program and ensure that it will continue to provide communities with the resources they need to make their neighborhoods safer and the quality of life for residents better.

Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
United States Senator

Anthony D. Weiner
Member of Congress

Methodology

Violent Crime Rates

To calculate violent crime rates we first take the numbers from Table 3 of the Zhao and Thurman report. Table 3 shows that an increase in one dollar of COPS hiring grants per resident contributed to a corresponding decline of 5.26 violent crimes and an increase in one dollar of COPS innovative grants resulted in a decline of 12.93 violent crimes.

We then take the sum of hiring grants (each grant is split across three years) given to cities with populations over 10,000 from 1994-1999 and multiply it by the 5.26 found in the table and divide by 100,000. Then we multiply the sum of the innovative grants by 12.93 and divide by 100,000, but here we don't split up COPS funding because they are typically one year grants. Then we add them together. The following

formula was used to calculate the national numbers for violent crimes reduced, as well as the violent crimes reduced for each of the 500 cities.

The effect of COPS grants from 1994-1999 on violent crime from 1995-2000 =

$$((5.26*(\text{Hire94} + \text{Hire95} + \text{Hire96} + \text{Hire97} + (\text{Hire98}*.72) + (\text{Hire99}*.38))) + (12.93*(\text{Inv94} + \text{Inv95} + \text{Inv96} + \text{Inv97} + \text{Inv98} + \text{Inv99}))) / 100,000$$

For example, from FY94 through FY99, \$2,015,040,027 was provided nationally in hiring grants to cities with populations over 10,000. FY94 through FY99, \$366,875,816 was provided in innovative grants.

$$[(\$366,875,816*12.93) + (\$2,015,040,027*5.26)] / 100,000 = 153,428 \text{ violent crimes reduced nationally in cities with populations over 10,000.}$$

Property Crime Rates

For property crime rates we use the numbers from Table 4. Table 4 shows that an increase in one dollar of COPS hiring grants per resident contributed to a corresponding decline of 21.63 property crimes and an increase in one dollar of COPS innovative grants resulted in a decline of 45.53 property crimes.

We then take the sum of hiring grants given to cities with populations over 10,000 from 1994-1999 and multiply it by the 21.63 found in the table and divide by 100,000. We multiply the sum of the innovative grants by 45.53 and divide by 100,000, but again we don't split up COPS funding because they are typically one year grants. Then we add them together. The following formula was used to calculate the national numbers for violent crimes reduced, as well as the violent crimes reduced for each of the 500 cities.

The effect of COPS grants from 1994-1999 on property crime from 1995-2000:

$$((21.63*(\text{Hire94} + \text{Hire95} + \text{Hire96} + \text{Hire97} + (\text{Hire98}*.72) + (\text{Hire99}*.38))) + (45.53*(\text{Inv94} + \text{Inv95} + \text{Inv96} + \text{Inv97} + \text{Inv98} + \text{Inv99}))) / 100,000$$

For example, from FY94 through FY99, \$2,015,040,027 was provided nationally in hiring grants to cities with populations over 10,000. FY94 through FY99, \$366,875,816 was provided in innovative grants.

[\$366,875,816*45.53) + (\$2,015,040,027*21.63)] / 100,000 = 602,891 Property Crimes Reduced nationally in cities with populations over 10,000.

It is important to note that these numbers represent a very conservative estimate of the effect of COPS grants on crime as they do not include grants to special police forces, or state or county law enforcement. Thus, these figures are most properly characterized as the MINIMUM number of crimes from 1995-2000 reduced by COPS grants awarded from 1994-1999.

Congressman Anthony D. Weiner

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