

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

The President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you begin preparing the Fiscal Year 2008 Budget, we write to urge you to include funding for two programs critical to the safety of our nation's schoolchildren: COPS in Schools (CIS) and Secure Our Schools (SOS).

CIS was created in response to the 1999 tragedy in Columbine, Colorado and has funded more than 6,420 School Resource Officers (SROs) – law enforcement officials trained to engage in community police work in and around schools. SROs funded by the CIS program have improved cooperation between school staff, students, parents, and law enforcement personnel – and have prevented crimes and improved the response to incidents that have occurred.

SOS provides funding to law enforcement agencies to partner with schools for the acquisition of crime prevention equipment, staff, and training. For example, SOS grants have covered the cost of metal detectors and other hardware, security assessments, and security training for students and school personnel.

Despite the fact that CIS and SOS enjoy the strong support of both law enforcement and school officials, you have proposed zero funding for both programs in each of your previous five budget requests. Unfortunately, Congress complied with your request regarding CIS and eliminated funding in fiscal year 2006. Congress has funded SOS at \$15 million for each of the past two fiscal years.

As experts will likely reiterate at the White House conference on school violence you recently announced, America's children spend more time in school than anywhere outside the home. This places enormous responsibility on teachers, administrators, security staff, and law enforcement officials to keep them safe, and the federal government must do everything possible to support this complex effort.

Therefore, we are requesting that you include in your proposed FY 2008 budget \$200 million for the CIS program, with \$180 million dedicated to hiring School Resource Officers and \$20 million to support the Community Police Development Institutes, which enhance training and emergency planning for local police agencies and school districts. We also request that you allocate at least \$15 million to the SOS program.

As the recent tragedies in Colorado, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania have made clear, our children remain all too vulnerable in school.

We appreciate your deep concern about the welfare of our nation's schoolchildren, and we look forward to working with you on this and other issues related to school-safety. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joe Biden

Ken Salazar

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Barack Obama

Ed Kennedy

Herb Kohl

Chuck Schumer

Barack Obama

Blanche R. Linsden

Chris D.M.