

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 16, 2008

The Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Chairman
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
135 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
Committee on Appropriations
135 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Byrd and Ranking Member Cochran:

We are writing to request \$5 million in FY2009 funding for the Rural Policing Institute (RPI) through the Senate Appropriations Homeland Security Subcommittee.

Last year, Congress passed and the President signed into law the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-53). Before moving to final passage of the bill, the Senate passed a bipartisan amendment (S.Amdt.280) by a vote of 82-1 to create the RPI as part of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), with total authorized funding of \$35 million over six years and \$5 million in FY09 funding, specifically.

The passage of this legislation was an important step toward providing the necessary training for our rural and tribal law enforcement agencies as they address public safety issues in rural areas – specifically, meth trafficking and violence in rural schools and homes. We must now make the investments necessary to ensure the RPI has the resources it needs to successfully fulfill its mission.

If funded, the RPI will assess the challenges confronting rural and tribal law enforcement agencies; develop and provide training programs specific to their needs; and conduct outreach to ensure they are aware of new training opportunities. Providing this training is especially important given the budgetary shortfalls that have forced many rural and tribal law enforcement agencies to forego vital education programs for their staff.

Law enforcement officers from communities large and small constitute the front-line of our homeland defense. Given this, it is undoubtedly in our national interest to ensure they have access to the best possible training. The RPI is in our view the necessary vehicle to provide this training to our rural and tribal law enforcement agencies.

Thank you for your consideration of this request to fund the Rural Policing Institute at \$5 million for FY2009.

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Sincerely,

Ken Salazar
John Thune

Sayby Chaublin
Pete Dinkins

Jon Tester

Ben Cardin

Jeff Sessions

Ron Wyden

Noah Coleman

Mark Warner

Joe Manchin

Max Baucus

George V. Voinovich

Jay Rockefeller

Tim Wicker

Pat Roberts

Debbie Stabenow

Edwards Johnson

Amy Klobuchar
