

Washington, DC - Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) applauded House passage today of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Improvements Act. The bill bolsters the successful COPS program, authorizing \$1.8 billion a year over the next five years to help improve community policing efforts and place an additional 50,000 police officers on the street nationwide.

"As a member of the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus, I have long been a supporter of the COPS program," **stated Rep. Hoyer.** "Since its creation in 1994, the COPS program has seen great success across the country, allowing officers to spend more time on the streets fighting and preventing crime through time-saving technology, information-sharing systems, and improved communications equipment."

The COPS program provides financial assistance to eligible police departments to help improve community policing efforts. H.R. 1139 authorizes \$1.25 billion a year for COPS hiring grants, \$350 million a year for COPS technology grants, and \$200 million a year for hiring community prosecutors.

Since its creation, the COPS program has provided Maryland with over \$210 million to hire more than 2,500 officers. Congressman Hoyer's Fifth Congressional District has received over \$31 million to hire nearly 600 police officers since 1995. Despite its success, funding for the program was cut significantly under the previous Administration and was completely eliminated in FY2006 and 2007. The new majority in Congress worked to restore funding for the program in the years since.

"The cuts to COPS significantly hampered the ability of law enforcement agencies to hire additional officers and invest in the community policing programs that have proven to be so successful," **said Rep. Hoyer.** "Now, during a time of recession, enforcement agencies are being hit again - operating under smaller budgets at the same time they must address the rise in certain types of crime brought on by increased foreclosures and other economic stresses."

"The COPS Improvements Act renews the commitment to helping law enforcement address these challenges, providing the tools it needs to combat crime and ensure the safety of our communities. I am pleased that this bill has passed the House, and look forward to its

consideration in the Senate," **concluded Hoyer.**

###