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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-4209**

October 30, 2014

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(U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION)

The Honorable Eric H. Holder Jr.  
Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Holder:

I was disturbed to learn that the City of Memphis Police Department was deprived of more than \$2.2 million that it rightfully should have been awarded from the COPS Hiring Recovery Program in 2009. I urge you to rectify this mistake and ensure that Memphis receives all of the money it is owed.

According to the Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General (IG) report entitled "Audit of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services Grants Awarded to DeKalb County, Georgia," funds that were improperly awarded to DeKalb County should have been awarded to Memphis instead. The report explained that DeKalb County submitted inaccurate data to support its application, including reporting a percentage reduction in civilian agency personnel that could not be verified, under-reporting the local area unemployment statistics, and over-stating all crime incidents. Under the DOJ's methodology DeKalb County would not have been eligible to receive funding had the correct data been supplied and \$2,229,357 would have been provided to Memphis instead. This money would have enabled Memphis to fully fund the 50 officers it requested, instead of funding for the 37 it received.

As you know, the COPS Hiring Recovery Program (CHRP) was created as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to provide additional resources to local law enforcement departments struggling to maintain their budgets during the Great Recession. CHRP enabled police departments to hire, rehire, or retain police officers during these difficult economic times, both enhancing public safety and providing much needed jobs. The Memphis economy has been particularly hard hit in recent years and by losing out on much needed CHRP funding, it was

forced to redirect resources to its police department away from other important priorities in an already strained budget.

The IG report recommends that the DOJ remedy the funds improperly awarded to DeKalb County. It is only fair that Memphis now receive the money it should have been awarded had the DOJ been supplied with accurate data. I appreciate the IG's thorough investigation, which discovered this error, and I hope you will do all you can to ensure that the DOJ provides Memphis the funding it needs and deserves. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

As always, I remain,

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Cohen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steve" and last name "Cohen" clearly legible.

Steve Cohen

Member of Congress