



Hundreds of Police Chiefs, Sheriffs,
Prosecutors, other Law Enforcement
Leaders, and Violence Survivors
Preventing Crime and Violence

State Director
Bruce R. Clash
Deputy Director
Stephen L. Doster

January 6, 2017

The Honorable Tom Wolf
Governor
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
225 Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Wolf:

As Pennsylvania police chiefs, sheriffs, and district attorneys and members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, we know from experience and from research that high-quality targeted investments in at-risk children and families are among the most powerful weapons we have in the fight against crime.

As you continue drafting your proposed 2017-2018 state budget, we respectfully ask you to prioritize high-quality early learning and home visiting/parent coaching investments for Pennsylvania's most vulnerable families that are shown to cut child abuse and neglect, later crime and other costs and help put families on paths to self sufficiency.

We thank you for your leadership regarding the progress Pennsylvania has made in the last two fiscal years to expand funding for the high-quality Pre-K Counts and Head Start Supplemental Assistance early learning programs. More than 6,000 additional children in lower-income families are now participating in these programs who otherwise would not have access.

In the interest of protecting public safety—one of government's core responsibilities—as well as to increase high school graduation rates, reduce criminal justice system and prison costs, decrease special education costs, and gain the myriad of other demonstrated benefits, we support a significant expansion of the Pre-K Counts and Head Start Supplemental Assistance programs in next year's state budget. Specifically, we urge you to include an \$85 million combined expansion for these programs as another incremental step towards serving the 112,000 eligible kids most at risk of educational failure currently without access. This investment would allow 10,000 more Pennsylvania children to attend high-quality pre-k next year.

We also ask that you again propose to increase the Family Centers and Home Visiting line item (DHS)—next year by \$16 million—to support parenting and child development in Pennsylvania's most vulnerable families. The providers of the four evidence-based home visiting models in PA (Nurse-Family Partnership, Healthy Families America, Parents as Teachers, and Early Head Start) could apply for funding from the grant program this new funding would create. These home visiting programs serve different targeted populations and employ various trained home visitors to mentor young parents and help them envision and create a positive future for their families. *Strong research results of these programs include reduced maternal and later juvenile crime, reduced child abuse and neglect, positive parenting, healthy child development and reduced dependency on public assistance.*

Additionally, a \$1.2 million increase to the Nurse-Family Partnership line item (DHS) will help this particularly effective program that utilizes registered nurses as home visitors to retain and attract RNs in the competitive market. NFP has not received an increase in state support beyond the current \$11.97 million in almost 10 years.

We are convinced that the best investments Pennsylvania can make to curtail criminal activity before it starts are those shown to help at-risk children get a solid start in life. As law enforcement leaders who have seen too many kids grow up to become criminals, we urge you to propose the above investments that will make our communities safer and save taxpayer dollars for many years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

John T. Adams, District Attorney, Berks County

Ronny R. Anderson, Sheriff, Cumberland County

David J. Arnold, District Attorney, Lebanon County

Dominick Bellizzie, Chief of Police, Solebury Township, Bucks County

Lance M. Benedict, Sheriff, Susquehanna County

Donald L. Bowers, Jr., Chief of Police, New Holland Borough, Lancaster County

Ivy L. Brenzel, Chief of Police, Moscow Borough, Lackawanna County

Timothy T. Chamberlain, Sheriff, Columbia County

Diane Conrad, Chief of Police, Ferguson Township, Centre County

James Custer, Sheriff, Fayette County

Paul T. Dickinson, Chief of Police, Towamencin Township, Montgomery County

Patrick Dougherty, District Attorney, Indiana County

Royce Engler, Chief of Police, Wright Township, Luzerne County

James R. Farringer, Superintendent, O'Hara Township Police Department, Allegheny County

Robert E. Fyock, Sheriff, Indiana County

Thomas A. Gaspari, Chief of Police, Lower Chichester Township, Delaware County

Ray C. Geringer, Sheriff, Montour County

Richard A. Goldinger, District Attorney, Butler County

Carl J. Gotwald, Sheriff, Jefferson County

Travis L. Kendall, District Attorney, Fulton County

(continued)

Kenneth L. Klakamp, Sheriff, Warren County

Roger J. Maclean, Chief Criminal Investigator, Lehigh County District Attorney's Office

Edward M. Marsico, District Attorney, Dauphin County

James B. Martin, District Attorney, Lehigh County

David A. Mettin, Chief of Police, Slate Belt Regional Police Dept., Northampton County

Robert D. "Bobby" Montgomery, Sheriff, Sullivan County

James W. Muller, Sheriff, Adams County

S. Michael Murphy, Chief of Police, Upper Moreland Township, Montgomery County

Thomas R. Nelling, Chief of Police, Birmingham Township, Chester County

Henry "Rick" Pasqualini, Chief of Police, Newton Township, Bucks County

John W. Peck, District Attorney, Westmoreland County

Michael Piccuch, District Attorney, Snyder County

Mark G. Pugliese, Chief of Police, West Hempfield Township, Lancaster County

Michael A. Scott, Chief of Police, Baldwin Borough, Allegheny County

Clinton J. Walters, Sheriff, Bradford County

Carolyn B. Welsh, Sheriff, Chester County

John A. Zechman, Sheriff, Snyder County