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September 22, 2022

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 1.4 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I write to express support for the passage of the Invest to Protect Act of 2022 (H.R. 6448), the Break the Cycle of Violence Act (H.R. 4118) and the VICTIM Act of 2022 (H.R. 5768).

AFSCME members in law enforcement and public safety around the country work hard to keep our families and communities safe – patrolling our streets, securing our airports and enforcing our laws. These bills invest in policing, focusing funds on public safety and criminal investigations of the most serious crimes and recognize the complex challenges law enforcement agencies confront and face. Public safety officers put their own lives at risk every day to serve and protect the public. Law enforcement work is dangerous and comes with increases in many forms of stress, including physical, psychosocial and anticipatory stress. We support increasing access to qualified counselors for critical incident stress management and traumatic stress. Personnel must be able to confidentially access such programs without fear of stigma or penalty.

**AFSCME supports the Invest to Protect Act of 2022 (H.R. 6448)** because it would invest \$3 billion over five years in new federal funds to support hiring, retaining and training law enforcement officers in localities that employ fewer than 125 law enforcement officers. This bill will help advance training in de-escalation, victim-centered handling of domestic violence situations and response to calls for service involving persons with mental health needs, disabilities, veterans and others. Importantly, these federal grant funds can be used to pay retention bonuses, overtime because of training, stipends for graduate mental health education for law enforcement officers and to provide access to law-enforcement focused behavioral health services.

**AFSCME supports the Break the Cycle of Violence Act (H.R. 4118)** because it will invest \$5 billion in new federal funds over seven years for targeted grants to communities with higher rates of homicides to fund coordinated, community-based strategies to interrupt the cycle of violence. These funds will help law enforcement officers by increasing needed trauma-response care and helping those at elevated risk of being victimized or engaging in community violence. We support needed funding for social services and other programs which enhance the safety and well-being of the public.

**American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO**

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**AFSCME supports the Violence Incident Clearance and Technological Investigative Methods Act of 2022 or VICTIM Act of 2022 (H.R. 6768)** because it will invest \$1 billion in new federal funds to help state and local law enforcement agencies or prosecuting offices to improve clearance rates for homicides, rapes, other aggravated felonies and non-fatal shootings. These federal funds can be used for a range of uses, including to help hire, train and retain detectives who will be dedicated to investigating those serious crimes and establishing a program to support officers who experience stress or trauma as a result of responding to or investigating shootings or other violent crime. Importantly these grants do not require a state or local match in funds through the end of 2032.

For AFSCME members public service is not just a job, it is a calling. The work our members perform makes our communities safer and a better place to live. AFSCME supports these bills to fund, protect and support our public safety officers and to build safer thriving communities through effective community-based violence reduction initiatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edwin S. Jayne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Edwin S. Jayne  
Director of Federal Government Affairs

ESJ:LB:hf