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March 9, 2020

Phil Keith
Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)
U.S. Department of Justice
145 N Street, NE
Washington, DC 20530

Re: Letter of Support for the Orlando Police Department's FY 2020 COPS Hiring Program Grant Application

Dear Director Keith:

I write in strong support of the Orlando Police Department's (OPD) FY 2020 COPS Hiring Program (CHP) grant application to the U.S. Department of Justice. The OPD plans to use the grant funding to hire 10 officers to reinstate the OPD's Neighborhood Policing Unit (NPU) to a full, independent squad. OPD's goals for these officers are to build relationships in the community and to reduce criminal activity in high crime areas, making Orlando a safer place for residents and visitors.

With this grant funding, the OPD plans to restore the NPU under its Community Relations Division to facilitate its community policing focus and help ensure that the City's more troubled neighborhoods receive the attention they need. As part of their community policing efforts, the officers will be deployed in pairs to high-crime apartment communities around the City of Orlando. OPD has identified a list of "top 20" apartment communities for crime and, from those areas, the NPU will choose starting points for their efforts.

The OPD will build relationships that allow citizens and patrol officers to work together when patrol officers are called into communities, breaking down some of the barriers that exist between law enforcement and citizens. OPD's goals include the implementation of community policing strategies that strengthen partnerships for safer communities and enhance its capacity to prevent, solve, and control crime.

I commend the OPD's focus on increasing its community policing and crime prevention efforts, which will help make Orlando safer. I encourage your full and fair consideration of the OPD's CHP grant application, consistent with all agency rules and regulations. If you have any questions, please contact Dao Nguyen in my office at (202) 225-4035.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephanie".

Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress