

D15A0516
Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention
Agency Responses to DLS Analysis and Recommendations
FY2013 Governor's Allowance

Senate Public Safety, Transportation and Environment Subcommittee
February 2, 2012
House Public Safety and Administration Subcommittee
February 6, 2012

Recommended Actions

1. **Strike the contingent reduction to the State Aid for Police Protection (SAPP) Grant Program; and**

4. **Reduce funding for State Aid for Police Protection (SAPP) grants - \$21,420,535 GF**

Response: We Concur

2. **Reduce the funding for the Baltimore City State's Attorney prosecution of gun crimes and violent offenders grant to fiscal 2012 level. (\$500,000)**

Disagree.

Response: On January 3, 2012 the State's Attorney's Office (SAO) implemented a Community Prosecution model that assigns prosecutors to three geographical zones, similar to established police districts within the city. The success of the new community prosecution model is dependent on collaboration and shared information. Previously, Assistant State's Attorneys (ASA) were assigned by units based on the types of crimes (misdemeanors, general felony, narcotics, guns).

The current office space occupied by the SAO in the City Courthouses makes the type of seamless coordination and consistent information sharing needed under the community prosecution model virtually impossible.

For example, the Circuit Court operations of the SAO are currently located in 3 different buildings in 20 different suites, most of which are non-contiguous:

- One of the Zones is located on two different floors.
- One of the Zones is located in the basement of Courthouse East adjacent to the loading dock, an area infested with rodents and pests.
- The Homicide unit occupies 4 different offices on 2 separate floors.

With staff so scattered throughout the Courthouses, it is difficult to achieve efficiency and to manage the SAO information technology network. This funding

will enable the SAO to move to a new building where their offices can be consolidated on 3½ floors, thereby allowing prosecutors to operate more efficiently and more collaboratively.

Geographically unifying the office would help with prosecutor retention. Most ASAs remain for approximately 2-3 years and then leave, often because of poor working conditions. By creating a stronger sense of community among the office as a whole, young prosecutors can receive the support they need to remain with the office.

GOCCP respectfully requests this short term financial support remain in the budget to help the Baltimore City SAO consolidate its office space will reap long-term enduring benefits for the citizens of Baltimore City and the State of Maryland, and help us achieve even further reduction in crime.

3. Eliminate funding for the Operation Safe Kids initiative (OSK) (\$800,000)

Disagree.

Response: Our Safe Streets initiative is supported by approximately \$2,950,158. This includes the \$2,327,049 previously designated for CSAFE in addition to the \$623,109 needed to sustain the existing Safe Streets sites in Annapolis and Salisbury. Of the \$2,950,158, \$800,000 was tentatively identified for OSK type initiatives with a focus on juveniles as part of Safe Streets. After further review and consultation with our prospective Safe Streets partners, we believe that only \$120,000 will be needed to fund OSK programs as part of Safe Streets. The remainder of the \$800,000 (\$680,000) will be used to support other Safe Streets initiatives that are not exclusively focused on juveniles.

It is important to remember that the \$800,000 was not additional funding requested for OSK, but was part of the overall amount already allocated under the Safe Streets umbrella. Therefore, GOCCP respectfully requests that the \$800,000 remain to support Safe Streets at the same level as originally budgeted.

Issues

GOCCP should comment on the impact associated with the significant decrease of federal grant funding in fiscal 2013 (p.3).

Response: Over the last few years, Senator Mikulski and Governor O'Malley have made it a priority to protect federal funding to support law enforcement and public safety in Maryland. The State of Maryland has, for example, become compliant with the Adam Walsh Act, thereby avoiding a 10% penalty to our allocation under the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (BJAG) program.

Despite our best efforts and the strong support of our delegation in Washington, the BJAG program was still reduced by 17%. Although this reduction may seem large, we have actually fared well given the current budget environment in Washington.

GOCCP knew that money received under ARRA was a one-time infusion of funding. Any decrease in funding – especially funding under the BJAG program which is our most flexible and versatile funding source for law enforcement and public safety, affects GOCCP’s ability to fund public safety initiatives. Therefore, since 2007 GOCCP has made it a priority to invest in projects with long term, enduring value.

Some of the programs funded with BJAG money that should yield benefits for years to come include:

- Police communications equipment, including radios for Prince George’s County
- LPRs
- DNA backlog reduction projects
- Live Scan machines to reduce the use of inked print cards
- Mobile data terminals for police
- CCTV systems
- CAD/RMS systems
- Crime Analysts
- Warrants reduction initiatives

GOCCP should comment on recent trends in crime fighting data, including changes in gun-related measures. (p.8)

Response: Over the last 5 years, crime in Maryland has been reduced to all time lows in almost all crime categories.

Maryland 2010 Crime Totals and Crime Rates

Crime Type	2010 Total	Ranking**	2010 Rate*	Ranking**
Homicides	426	Lowest since 1986	7.4	Lowest ever reported
Rapes	1,228	Higher than 2009	21.3	Higher than 2009
Robberies	11,053	Lowest ever reported	191.4	Lowest ever reported
Aggravated Assaults	18,898	Lowest since 1983	327.3	Lowest since 1976
Violent Crime	31,605	Lowest since 1978	547.4	Lowest ever reported
Breaking & Entering	36,700	Lowest since 2005	635.7	Lowest ever reported
Larceny/Thefts	118,583	Lowest ever reported	2,053.9	Lowest ever reported
Motor Vehicle Thefts	18,029	Lowest since 1984	312.3	Lowest ever reported
Property Crime	173,312	Lowest ever reported	3,001.8	Lowest ever reported
Total Crime	204,917	Lowest ever reported	3,549.2	Lowest ever reported

* Rates for 2010 are based on 2010 population data per 100,000 residents.

** "Lowest ever reported" indicates the lowest numbers/rates reported since 1975 when the Maryland UCR program was first adopted

These historic reductions have been achieved through:

1. Seamless coordination and consistent information sharing
2. More effective crime fighting strategies to include crime mapping and crime analysis
3. A focus on the most violent offenders
4. Effective use of technology such as DNA and LPR
5. Relentless assessment, accountability and follow-up

In fact, Maryland's efforts to reduce crime have been recognized by the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the Council of State Governments.

Although the number of guns seized has in fact dropped since 2009, that decrease should not be attributed to a lack of effectiveness. The gun task forces supported by GOCCP has been in existence now for several years, and the efforts of those task forces in targeting gun offenders are having an impact. The nationally recognized VPI has been in operation since 2008 to target known violent offenders, and that initiative has been successful in reducing firearms related violence. Many gun offenders are now being prosecuted in federal court where the penalties and prison sentences are more severe.

GOCCP has also made grant funding available to locate and arrest violent offenders with open warrants. In 2011 alone, over 2000 offenders with open warrants were removed from the streets.

Simply stated, our focus on illegal firearms and criminals who use and possess them is having a positive impact. Although there may be some loose correlation between the number of guns seized and the number of gun cases prosecuted, it should be noted that the number of gun cases prosecuted is almost the same from 2009 to 2011 (1830 vs. 1891) even though gun seizures have dropped. This, we believe, is attributable to better police training and more effective coordination between police and prosecutors.

Finally, it is true that the number of crime victims served tripled from 2010 to 2011. This is attributable to a few different factors:

- GOCCP became the SAA for VOCA, the largest federal funding source for crime victims.
- The O'Malley Administration has, like no administration in history, made support for crime victims an integral part of the state's over public safety agenda.

- The O'Malley Administration has as one of its goals to reduce violent crime against women and children by 25%. Supporting women and child victims helps prevent repeat victimization.

GOCCP should comment on its plans to expand the Safe Streets initiative to other localities in the State. Specifically, GOCCP should identify potentially Safe Streets grant recipients, the number of Safe Streets sites that will become active in fiscal 2013, and the possible negative effects associated with eliminating the 34 CSAFE sites in the State. (pg. 13)

Response: Based on an analysis of crime rates throughout Maryland, GOCCP will be inviting selected municipalities and jurisdiction to apply for funding under the Safe Streets model. GOCCP expects to award 8-10 grants under Safe Streets during SFY 2013 to establish comprehensive and coordinated models for reducing violent crime and containing violent offenders. Safe Streets also leverages existing statewide crime reduction strategies such as the adult and juvenile Violence Prevention Initiatives, Comp Stat, crime analysis, crime mapping, and warrant service. Safe Streets also relies on improved police tactics and practices, effective use of technology and expanded community partnerships. Further expansion may be considered in future years.

GOCCP does not anticipate any substantial negative effects as a result of this transition from CSAFE to Safe Streets. CSAFE was, in large part, designed to force collaboration among police officers, agents from the Division of Parole & Probation, case managers from the Department of Juvenile Services and community leaders in selected geographical areas. However, the CSAFE model has become obsolete for several reasons:

- Communications among DPP, DJS and police have become systematic and institutionalized to the point where forced collaboration through CSAFE is no longer necessary.
- Although CSAFE established "forced cooperation," there was no clear strategy for reducing crime. Instead, the measure of success was simply getting together to meet.
- CSAFE programs existed in communities with very low crime rates.
- CSAFE lacked focus on violent repeat offenders.

Instead, we know from our experiences in Annapolis and Salisbury that the Safe Streets model substantially reduces crime. For example, violent crimes in Annapolis dropped by about 30% after implementation of Safe Streets and the results in Salisbury have been equally impressive. Since the implementation of Safe Streets in Salisbury, violent

crime fell by 24% and property crime dropped by 16%. Therefore, we believe that the transition from CSAFE to Safe Streets will significantly improve public safety rather than having substantial negative consequences.

Nevertheless, in order to help ensure a smooth transition, GOCCP will consider alternative grant funding on a limited basis to help jurisdictions retain critical CSAFE personnel until local funding can be found.