



Urban League of
Metropolitan St. Louis, Inc.

**Empowering Communities.
Changing Lives.**

May 5, 2015,

Office of U.S. Senator McCaskill
5850 Delmar Blvd., Suite A
St. Louis, MO 63112

Dear Senator McCaskill,

I write to you today in enthusiastic support of the Protecting Communities and Police Act. Policing in the United States is an inherently local issue, but the federal government has been providing law enforcement with ever-increasing amounts of funding and equipment. As a result, it too must take responsibility for providing the coordination and oversight necessary to ensure that law enforcement agencies are responsible stewards of community safety and adequately trained in the use of the equipment they receive. The Protecting Communities and Police Act will provide that oversight.

The mission of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis is to empower African Americans and others throughout the region in securing economic self-reliance, social equality and civil rights. This can only happen when the African American community in the region has an equality of opportunity unencumbered by racial profiling and economic and political disenfranchisement. The death of Michael Brown, and the resulting protests in Ferguson laid bare for the world to see that this is not yet a reality, and much work remains.

The tragedy of Michael Brown's death, the resulting confrontations between protestors and law enforcement in Ferguson, and similar fatal events and responses across the country have brought these issues into the national spotlight and raised Americans' awareness to the increasingly large role that the federal government plays in funding our state and local law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement agencies are getting about \$1 billion per year in federal funding and equipment.

The Protecting Communities and Police Act will help federal agencies better direct funding and equipment to those state and local law enforcement agencies that most need it, and allow more state and local input. This is critical because it provides local communities with input and visibility over the law enforcement agencies' entire budgets, and brings a measure of local accountability that has been lacking up to this point. The bill also requires states, local governments and law enforcement agencies establish the minimum standards necessary for training and the deployment of SWAT teams. In short, the Act will bring oversight and transparency to federal programs that are sorely lacking and help ensure that all law enforcement agencies and SWAT teams are well-trained and professionalized.

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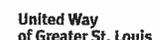
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I look forward to working with you to pass the Protecting Communities and Police Act in the coming months. On behalf of the Urban League of Metropolitan St. Louis, I thank you for your leadership on this issue and your commitment to fighting for the rights and opportunities of all citizens.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael McMillan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael McMillan
President and CEO