<u>Senate Committee on the Judiciary: "Helping State and Local Law Enforcement During an Economic Downturn"</u>
Response to Questions for the Record from U.S. Senator Russell D. Feingold
Charles H. Ramsey, Philadelphia Police Commissioner
February 4, 2009

Question:

The economic downturn now upon us is obvious and impossible to ignore, and it is clear from your testimony at the hearing that people in Philadelphia are struggling as a result. How specifically will your city use increased law enforcement funds to ensure that they provide a benefit to the economy as well as helping to fight crime?

Response:

The reinstitution of police hiring and law enforcement technology grants, coupled with the removal of previously required local matching funds, would lead to the hiring of 200 police officers and numerous civilian positions in forensics and intelligence in Philadelphia. During a time when layoffs are pervasive throughout state and local governments across the country, the creation of more than 200 jobs in the public sector would contribute greatly toward repairing an ailing economy besieged by rising unemployment rates.

Additionally, the stimulus package would forward funds for a number of infrastructure projects. Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter, in conjunction with the US Conference of Mayors in December 2008, submitted a "Ready-to-Go" list of capital projects to the federal government that included $860,500,000 in public safety projects, with a minimum of 2,200 jobs. Critical upgrades in law enforcement infrastructure initiatives not only create jobs with their implementation, but allow public safety agencies to more effectively use technology in their crime fighting mission, thereby increasing department-wide efficiencies and performance.

On a foundational level, the relationship between macroeconomic conditions, unemployment, falling educational rates, and crime rates is an area that has been extensively studied for over 50 years. We cannot ignore that all of these variables influence each other in myriad ways. A strong federal investment into local police agencies is an investment in to the lifeblood of our nation's metropolitan areas, which comprise 90% of our Gross Domestic Product. With increasing crime rates, companies, both private and public, suffer the consequences with fewer capital investments and job opportunities to attract a talented workforce. Funds earmarked for increasing the number of police, advancing technology and improving forensics capacity will collectively benefit the economy by keeping our population bases and revenues generated by the business sector stable.