

Testimony of Thomas Maurer
Sheriff
Wayne County, Ohio

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on behalf of

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS
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SUMMARY

1) Increase Funding for Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Programs and After-School Programs

Research shows that quality early childhood education programs and after-school programs reduce later crime and violence. The Child Care and Development Block Grant and Head Start enable kids to benefit from cost-effective programs that can give kids a good start in life and stop kids from becoming criminals. Unfortunately, due to lack of funding, the Child Care and Development Block Grant serves only one out of seven eligible kids and Head Start serves less than two-thirds of the eligible preschoolers.

2) Increase Funding for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Programs

An estimated 2.7 million children were abused or neglected in 2001, including 900,000 confirmed cases. Based on confirmed cases in just one year, an additional 35,000 violent criminals and more than 250 murderers will emerge as adults who would never have become violent criminals if not for the abuse and neglect they endured as children. The Promoting Safe and Stable Families program and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act support programs that are proven to dramatically reduce child abuse and neglect and later crime.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Thomas Maurer. I've been in law enforcement for thirty years, and I've spent the past 7 years as sheriff of Wayne County, Ohio. I am also a member of the anti-crime group FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS—more than 2,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and victims of violence from across the country who have come together to take a hard-nosed look at what really works to keep kids from becoming criminals.

As a sheriff, I know there is no substitute for tough law enforcement. However, no punishment can undo a crime victim's anguish. We could be saving thousands of lives and preventing thousands of crimes by investing more in cost-effective proven programs that give kids the right start in life.

Research confirms what law enforcement leaders know: quality child care programs and after-school programs reduce crime and violence. For example, long-term research shows that compared to children who participated in Chicago's Child-Parent Centers, kids left out of the program were 70 percent more likely to have been arrested for a violent crime by age 18. The program is also cost-effective, producing seven dollars in benefits for every one dollar invested.

The peak hours for violent juvenile crime are the after-school hours from 3:00 to 6:00 PM. Four years ago, in my own community of Wooster, Ohio, the Salvation Army started an after-school program that provided educational and recreational activities for kids who had been unsupervised. Since that time, we have seen a gradual decrease in truancy and disturbance calls.

The Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is the federal government's principal support for child care and after-school programs. Unfortunately, CCDBG is so underfunded that it serves only one out of seven eligible kids. Child care has not received an increase in federal funding since FY 2002. By the Administration's own estimates of its budget proposal, 300,000 kids will lose federal child care assistance between 2003 and 2009. I hope that you will help reduce crime by significantly increasing funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant this year.

Head Start, the federally-funded preschool program for poor kids, is so underfunded that it serves less than two-thirds of the eligible preschoolers, and Early Head Start serves less than 5% of the eligible babies and toddlers. President Bush's budget proposed an increase in funding for Head Start of \$169 million. I hope that Congress will significantly increase investments in Head Start and Early Head Start, and, at a minimum, will approve the President's proposed increase that will account for inflation, so Head Start will not have to serve even fewer kids.

Today, like every day in America, thousands of defenseless children will be battered, bruised, ignored, sexually abused, or killed by the very people they instinctively turn to for nurturing. An estimated 2.7 million children were abused or neglected in 2001, including 900,000 confirmed cases. Too often, child abuse and neglect fosters a cycle of violence, and officers are forced to arrest a kid whom they saw ten years earlier when they arrested his parent for child abuse. The best available research indicates that, based on confirmed cases in just one year, an additional

35,000 violent criminals and more than 250 murderers will emerge as adults who would never have become violent criminals if not for the abuse and neglect they endured as children.

Fortunately, quality home visiting programs, such as the Nurse Family Partnership, cut child abuse and neglect by 80% and cut later arrests of the children in half. This program saves four dollars for every one dollar spent.

The Promoting Safe and Stable Families program funds community-based services that prevent child abuse and neglect. Last year, the President's budget proposed \$505 million—the full authorization for this vital program, but Congress only appropriated \$404 million. I applaud the President for proposing to increase funding to \$505 million again in Fiscal Year 2005, and hope that Congress will follow his lead.

In Fiscal Year 2004, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act received \$90 million, far less than the \$200 million authorized in June 2003. The President's 2005 budget proposes a modest increase, which would bring funding to \$134 million. I hope that Congress will fully fund CAPTA at \$200 million.

Law enforcement leaders are united—resolutions supporting such investments have been adopted by nearly all the major law enforcement organizations including the National Sheriffs Association and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

If we do not invest in quality child care programs, after-school programs, and child abuse and neglect prevention programs for America's most vulnerable kids, many of them will grow up to become America's most wanted adults—jeopardizing the safety of all Americans for years to come.

Thank you for this opportunity to present our views on how your subcommittee can help to reduce crime. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

THOMAS G. MAURER

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Experience-

Wayne County Sheriff, Wayne County, OH

1997 to present-

Elected as Sheriff, for Wayne County. Employ 100 sheriff's office personnel. Operate one main jail holding 108 prisoners and one "discipline and rehabilitation center," which holds 60 non-violent offenders. The latter being the only type operating in Ohio. Managing a 4.3 million budget. Statutorily protecting the unincorporated areas of Wayne County, and in charge of all court civil processing.

1987-1997-

Senior Adult Probation Officer, Wayne County Common Pleas Court,
Wooster, OH

Operated a state grant project which supervised 50 high risk offenders within the community.

1973-1987-

Deputy Sheriff, Wayne County, OH

All law enforcement duties pertaining to a patrol officer. In 1978 promoted to rank of sergeant. Court liaison officer for the office, and in charge of several continuing programs.

Education-

Wooster High School, Wooster, OH

Bluffton College, Bluffton, OH

Ohio Peace Officers Training

Police Instructor training

Numerous law enforcement schools, conferences, seminars

Paralegal, University of Georgia

Ohio Attorney Generals, New Sheriff, training

FBI, Great Lakes Leadership Seminar

Mandated 16 hours annually continued education courses since 1997

Professional Involvements-

Second Vice Chairman, Policy Board Member, MAGLOCLLEN (Middle Atlantic-Great Lakes Organized Crime Law Enforcement Network)

Chairman, Ohio Peace Officer's Training Academy

Education Committee, Buckeye State Sheriff's Association

Wayne County Community Corrections Board

Federal Grants Received by the Wayne County Sheriff's Office:

- D.A.R.E. Grant – \$19,000 per year in Fiscal Years 2002, 2003, 2004
- Violence Against Women Grant - \$40,000 in Fiscal Year 2002
- Bullet Proof Vest Partnership Grant - \$5,000 per year in Fiscal Years 2002, 2003, 2004
- Solid Waste District Grant - \$76,000 per year in Fiscal Years 2002, 2003, 2004