

The recession has severely strained police departments throughout New Jersey. Many have had to take cops off the beat; Trenton today has the same number of police on the rolls as it did in 1932, with troubling, dangerous effects.

For decades, the federal government has played a role in supporting police in our communities. Through the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, it has provided \$18 million to 34 communities throughout central New Jersey, putting at least 330 police officers and sheriff's deputies on the street.

Yet the Majority in Congress, intent on scaling back federal programs, proposed eliminating the COPS program last year. Although that effort ultimately failed, they are trying again to reduce the COPS program in 2013 Justice Department appropriations bill.

On Tuesday evening, I joined a bipartisan coalition of members to say, "Not so fast." Together with Republican Reps. Michael Grimm and Peter King, as well as Democratic Reps. Pedro Pierluisi and Bill Pascrell, Jr., I sponsored an amendment to increase support for the COPS program by \$94 million next year. Our amendment was adopted by the full House, and the underlying bill passed on Thursday and now moves to the other side of the Capitol for Senate consideration.

Putting an End to Warrantless Spying and Religious Profiling

Late last week, I introduced a resolution into the U.S. House condemning the New York Police Department's ethnic and religious profiling and warrantless surveillance of Muslim Americans.

As [first revealed in extensive reporting by the Associated Press](#), the NYPD has conducted wide-scale warrantless surveillance of Muslims throughout the country, including at mosques, student associations, and businesses in New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania. In most instances, the surveillance occurred in the absence of any evidence of wrongdoing – that is, organizations and individuals were surveilled solely on account of their religious affiliation. Muslims, of which there are millions in the US, tell me they feel the chill and the intimidation from such profiling.

Casting suspicion on people on the basis of their race, religion, or ethnicity without any legally valid reasons is not the way we behave in America, nor is it an effective means of gathering intelligence. As the historical record clearly demonstrates, profiling in policing is a substitute for thinking.

Our resolution condemns the unjustified surveillance and unlawful profiling of Muslim American Communities and demands that the New York Police Department cease any such warrantless surveillance activities within the United States and purge its database of information obtained in this unacceptable way.

Government Decisions Based on Evidence

Thomas Jefferson, from *Notes on the State of Virginia*, talking about government decisions based on evidence:

"The Newtonian Principle of gravitation is now more firmly established, on the basis of reason, than it would be were the government to step in, and to make it an article of necessary faith. Reason and experiment have been indulged, and error has fled before them."

Sincerely,

Rush Holt
Member of Congress