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**PEG LAUTENSCHLAGER**  
**ATTORNEY GENERAL**

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## ***NEWS RELEASE***

For Immediate Release  
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**\*\*\*See Attachment: Dollar Amount Your County Stands To Lose Under Bush Plan**

### **LAUTENSCHLAGER WARNS BIG FEDERAL CUTS TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT GRANTS WOULD HIT EVERY WISCONSIN COMMUNITY**

#### **In Letter To Wisconsin Congressional Delegation A.G. Urges Opposition to President Bush's Proposed Elimination Of Byrne Grant Funding**

Madison - Attorney General Peg Lautenschlager announced she has written to members of the Wisconsin Congressional delegation urging their opposition to Bush Administration plans to eliminate critical law enforcement grants to Wisconsin communities in the name of funding additional Homeland Security measures - measures she said could be more effectively made without sacrificing the safety of Wisconsin communities.

Lautenschlager said President Bush has proposed to eliminate the Edward Byrne Memorial Grant and Law Enforcement Block Grant and create a new Justice Assistance Grant program with drastically reduced funding.

According to current figures Lautenschlager cited, the current funding levels could be reduced by over 40%.

“The Department of Justice and Wisconsin law enforcement agencies depend on these dollars to provide important public safety functions,” Lautenschlager said. “Currently, Wisconsin receives \$9 million from the Byrne Grant and \$600,000 from the Law Enforcement Block Grant. The Department of Justice relies on these funds in two essential areas: \$850,800 reimburses counties for their cost of serving victims and witnesses of crimes, and \$4 million goes toward anti-drug task force (MEG) units throughout the state.”

( more )

ADD ONE

**The amount of funding to each county is detailed in the attached chart.**

Lautenschlager said other law enforcement agencies have been supported over the years with positions or special projects that would be severely impacted as well. She said 35 Assistant District Attorneys are paid using Byrne monies. Another example she cited is a recent upgrade to the Justice Department's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) which serves every local law enforcement agency in Wisconsin.

"If the overall budget package cuts these current law enforcement appropriations from \$1 billion to \$586 million and subsequently passes those reductions onto states it will have a devastating effect on our communities and public safety," Lautenschlager told Wisconsin members of Congress. "Especially hard hit will be smaller and rural agencies that have no other resources to draw upon by themselves."

Lautenschlager added that the first line of defense is local law enforcement and the communities they protect and serve. She said it would be counterproductive to advance Homeland Security initiatives at the expense of local law enforcement.

Lautenschlager pledged her support to working with Wisconsin's delegation to improve the President's current proposal.

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