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FIFTH DISTRICT, MISSOURI

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Congress of the United States House of Representatives

January 12, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

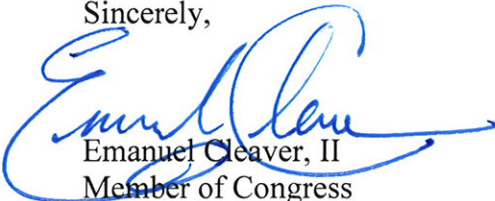
Dear President Obama:

Thank you for your efforts to strengthen community policing following the shooting of Michael Brown in my home state of Missouri. I was encouraged by your Administration's announcement of recommendations to broaden transparency of the 1033 military surplus program, to create a task force to promote effective crime reduction, and to encourage the use of police body cameras. As you may know, Representative Clay and I met with Secretary Hagel about the need to re-examine the 1033 program.

On December 11, 2014, I introduced H.R. 5865, the Camera Authorization and Maintenance Act or CAM Act. I introduced this legislation to encourage the use of body cameras by law enforcement agencies across the country. The goal is to increase transparency, protect the rights of all parties involved, and to provide better evidence for any police investigation, both for the citizens and the officers. Specifically, the bill requires all state and local law enforcement agencies who receive Department of Justice grants have their officers wear a body camera. To help communities pay for the cameras, the bill would authorize a body camera grant program. The bill also makes important steps towards studying the efficacy of body camera use and works to strengthen relationships between law enforcement and communities.

Respectfully, please consider the inclusion of funding for body cameras and community policing in the Department of Justice's Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program for Fiscal Year 2016 budget. This funding would help increase transparency and accountability for both law enforcement and the public and promote safer communities. The tragic events that unfolded in Ferguson, MO should not be repeated. We can work to do this by giving our local police officers the best tools and training available to protect and serve our communities.

Sincerely,



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress

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