



ADDRESSING POLICE MILITARIZATION

VALUE

A central goal of any community is the safety and security of its members. Police can and should play an important role in achieving this goal. To do this, police must work within the community with mutual trust and respect, and strive for positive community relationships.

PROBLEM

But, like many aspects of our current criminal justice system, the role of law enforcement has been overemphasized, overfunded, and outsized to proportions that no longer serve the goal of community safety and security. We need to take a close look at the factors that really cause communities to feel safe and identify what's working and what's not. One thing that's not working is the adoption of military-like practices that treat community members as enemies and enforces a war-like mentality that none of our communities want to live with.

SOLUTION

Police should aim to eliminate the harms of an unnecessarily militarized police force, and departments should eliminate militarized tactics that decrease their legitimacy in the communities they serve. Congress can do its part as well by severely limiting the transfer and use of military equipment to local law enforcement and creating a mechanism for investigating complaints and issuing sanctions regarding inappropriate use of equipment and tactics during mass demonstrations.

ACTION

Call your member of Congress and urge them to adopt and implement the Stop Militarizing Law Enforcement Act of 2015, H.R. 1232, which has been introduced to the House and prohibits the transfer of military equipment that is not suitable for law enforcement purposes by the Department of Defense.