

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1550, the Federal Law Enforcement Recruitment and Retention Act. This bill would require the Department of Justice to prioritize the placement and retention of personnel in those States and local jurisdictions that have high incidences of homicide and other violent crimes.

The recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers has become increasingly difficult in recent years. These challenges are faced not only by State and local police agencies, but also by Federal law enforcement agencies. Difficulty in recruiting and retaining law enforcement officers is particularly acute in jurisdictions that experience high rates of violent crime.

In fact, the high incidence of crime in a jurisdiction can deter a Federal law enforcement officer from seeking assignment in that jurisdiction and can frequently lead to high turnover. The failure to retain a law enforcement officer has been estimated to result in approximately \$100,000 in additional costs for the Department of Justice.

H.R. 1550, as amended, aims to address this problem by directing the Attorney General to give priority in placing and retaining agents in jurisdictions with particularly high crime rates. This bill also requires the Department of Justice to annually provide Congress with a detailed report on how it is implementing this directive.

H.R. 1550 is a modest, but necessary, measure to focus our crime-fighting efforts on the areas most in need.

I, too, want to commend our colleague, the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. Pierluisi), for his work in developing this bill. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1550.