

– SAMPLE LETTER TO ELECTED OFFICIALS –

March 22, 2016

Representative John Sarbanes  
2444 RHOB  
Washington D.C 20515

Senator Ben Cardin  
509 HSOB  
Washington D.C 20510

RE: Recent Shootings in Annapolis

Dear :

As your constituent, I ask you to seek a \$650,000 appropriation to reopen the Harbour House police substation at President and Madison Streets in Annapolis. Four people have been shot at that corner since December, and gun violence has been a recurring problem there that has recently grown worse. Harbour House is a public housing project that receives more than 80 percent of its operating funding from the U.S Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD). It operates under HUD oversight and is subject to federal regulations, but the property is managed by the Housing Authority of the City of Annapolis (HACA).

At a recent townhall meeting, the Annapolis Police Department reported 57 incidences of shots fired near President and Madison Streets in 2015. This is more than 30 times the national average reported by the FBI. Two people were killed by gunfire at the corner between August 2014 and August 2015, and without some significant change more deaths appear likely. Gun incidences are spilling into other neighborhoods as well as throughout the Harbour House complex.

In 1991, a police substation was opened at Harbour House and the citywide homicide rate fell from 15.1 per 100,000 population to 3.0 and 5.1 in the subsequent years. This is consistent with a study by Temple University and published by the Police Foundation that found deploying a police substation in a high crime area “led to an 80 percent decrease in the significant crime problem without displacing it to the surrounding vicinity.”

Unfortunately, the Harbour House substation closed only a few years later. The substation was financed by a federal grant to local police and HACA. Apparently, it had been successful at reducing violent crime and its funding expired. With gun violence on the rise again at the same location, we ask your help in reopening the substation.

I invite you to discuss these concerns in person by attending a meeting of the Eastport Civic Association (<http://www.eastportcivic.org>), and I ask that you assign a member of your staff to further investigate the request for a \$650,000 appropriation to reopen the substation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name