

# Police Executive Research Forum

## Resolution

*April 1988*

**WHEREAS:** The complexity of the police task is as great as that of any other profession, and they have a larger discretion than prosecutors, judges, and legislators, and

**WHEREAS:** We must first improve the police offices to improve policing, and the caliber of police service rendered to any given community is dependent on the competency of the police offer, and.

**WHEREAS:** The Federal Courts have ruled on the duties and requirements to be a competent police officer, and recognized the need for police officers who are intelligent, articulate, mature, and knowledgeable about social and political conditions, and.

**WHEREAS:** Research has demonstrated that college educated officers not only perform their duties in a superior manner when compared with non-college educated officers, but also have fewer acts of abuse of authority, and.

**WHEREAS:** All of the above findings and recommendations were made before the widespread adoption of community policing, which requires even greater intellectual abilities of officers to perform as community problem solvers and resource managers to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and.

**WHEREAS:** The Federal Government has recognized the importance of college education for law enforcement officers by previously funding the Law Enforcement Education Assistance Program and currently the Police Corps; and.

**WHEREAS:** The Police Executive Research forum has sponsored extensive research which has recommended that police officers have college degrees to improve the quality of policing, including “Higher Education as a Bona Fide Occupational Qualification (BFOQ) for Police: A Blueprint”, and.

**WHEREAS:** The Police Executive Research Forum is committed to the improvement of policing, including assuring that officers are fully qualified to perform their awesome and complex duties in a proper manner and without abuse of powers, as well as complying with the legal standards set forth by Federal Courts to avoid potential negligent hiring litigation.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

The Police Executive Research Forum recommends to its members that:

- 1) they promptly initiate activities in their departments to achieve the minimum educational requirement of a four year college degree for entering officers by 2003, as a primary goal;
- 2) they promptly establish policies and procedures for existing personnel without the requirement to complete four year degrees at the earliest time’
- 3) they establish long-term programs for requiring graduate degrees for promotion to higher ranks;
- 4) they encourage their Congressional representatives to re-instate federal funds for in-service officers to engage in college studies, such as the former Law Enforcement Education Assistance Program;
- 5) a Police Executive Research Forum Task Force to be established in furtherance of this Resolution;
- 6) the Police Association for College Education (formerly the American Police Association) which is devoted to “Improving Policing through College Educated Officers” be requested to assist the PERF Task Force in accomplishing this Resolution.