

March 21, 2016

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Vice Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
241 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Honda
Acting Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
1713 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Shelby and Mikulski and Congressmen Culberson and Honda:

We, the undersigned national groups representing a broad cross-section of the criminal and juvenile justice systems, thank you for your strong, consistent and thoughtful leadership on federal assistance to state and local evidence-based criminal justice programming. In particular we applaud your steadfast support for the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG).

We recognize the competing pressures you face as you seek to prioritize funding for many important programs in the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) bill. Therefore, we are particularly grateful to you for the small increase that was included in the 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act. However, funding for the Byrne JAG program has been reduced by one-third since FY10, causing a serious contraction in the reach of Byrne JAG-funded programs across the states and territories. We are concerned that additional reductions like the proposal to cut Byrne JAG funding by over 10 percent in the Administration's FY17 budget request will further hinder our ability to fight crime and reduce recidivism. We write today to respectfully ask that you continue to support at least level funding for Byrne JAG in the FY17 appropriations bill.

Byrne JAG is the cornerstone federal crime-fighting program, supporting the federal government's crucial role in spurring innovation, as well as testing and replicating evidence-based practices nationwide. States and localities use Byrne JAG to test emerging and evidence-based approaches to public safety challenges in their jurisdictions. Because Byrne JAG is flexible, states and local communities are able to use funding to address needs and fill gaps across the entire criminal and juvenile justice system – in prevention, enforcement, courts, prosecution and indigent defense, corrections, victim assistance, and other community support. This flexibility is the hallmark of the Byrne JAG program and is vitally important because when the criminal justice system is in balance, the system functions efficiently and effectively.

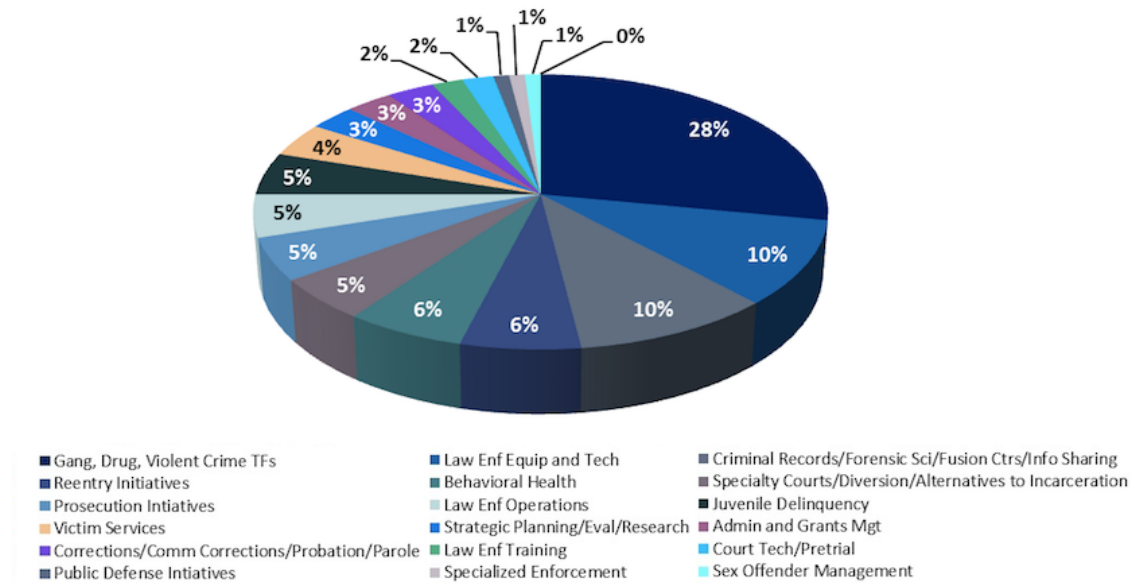
In most states, the state formula grant awards are made using a peer-reviewed, competitive application process based on a statewide strategic plan developed in conjunction with the state's system stakeholders. In partnership with the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs (OJP), the State Administering Agencies (SAAs) are engaged in a concerted strategy to increase investment in evidence-based and research-driven programs and innovative strategies and practices that are evaluated and can be replicated. Because of these efforts, Byrne JAG is advancing the evidence-based practices movement within the criminal justice field at a remarkable pace.

Byrne JAG grants also serve as a catalyst for collaboration within communities and across states, including the critical role multijurisdictional drug task forces play in targeting regional drug trafficking organizations. This task

force model is now being replicated in states across the country to tackle other cross-boundary crimes, such as human trafficking and cyber crime, while saving money and increasing efficiency in the process.

The National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) periodically surveys the SAAs, gathering a wealth of information about how states and local governments allocate Byrne JAG funding to meet system needs. From that survey, we know that Byrne JAG dollars were invested broadly across all segments of the criminal justice system in FY14, as illustrated in the chart below.

2014 State Byrne JAG Spending: Project Types



As you can see from the signatures below, Byrne JAG is supported by a broad and dedicated coalition of national organizations from across the criminal and juvenile justice systems. We recognize the central role Byrne JAG plays in preventing victimization; supporting innovative law enforcement practices; supporting the fair administration of and access to justice; serving and protecting crime victims; and leveraging other federal, state, local and private dollars in the balanced functioning of the criminal justice system.

We very much appreciate your leadership in fighting for a strong, vibrant Byrne JAG program. We thank you for your steadfast support and respectfully request strong funding for Byrne JAG in the FY17 CJS appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Smith
President
National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA)

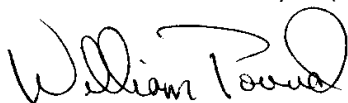
Michael J. Bouchard
Vice President
Major County Sheriffs' Association (MCSA)



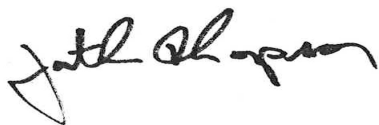
Matt Chase
Executive Director
National Association of Counties (NACo)



Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director
The U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM)



William T. Pound
Executive Director
National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)



Jonathan Thompson
Executive Director
National Sheriffs Association (NSA)



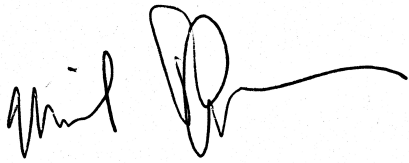
Terry Cunningham
President
International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)



William Fitzpatrick
President
National Districts Attorney Association (NDAA)



Katie Ray Jones
CEO
National Domestic Violence Hotline (NDVH)



Michael Thompson
Executive Director
Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG)



Mark Gwyn
President
Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies (ASCI)

Matt Jones

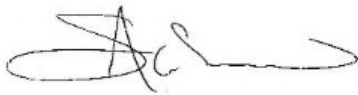
Matt Jones
President
National Association of Prosecutor Coordinators (NAPC)



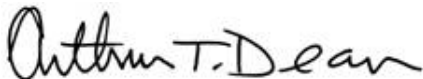
Charles P. Schoville
President
National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations (NAGIA)



Dorene Whitworth
Executive Director
Association of VAWA Administrators (AVA)



Steve Ambrosini
Executive Director
IJIS Institute (IJIS)



Arthur T. Dean
Major General, U.S. Army, Retired
Chairman and CEO
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)



Cherise Fanno Burdeen
Executive Director
Pretrial Justice Institute (PJI)



Marie Williams
Executive Director
Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ)



Jim Sawyer
Executive Director
National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies (NAPSA)



Kim Dvorchak
Executive Director
National Juvenile Defender Center (NJDC)



Anne Connell-Freund
President
International Community Corrections Association (ICCA)



Robert L. Morrison
Executive Director
National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD)



Scott Came
Executive Director
SEARCH



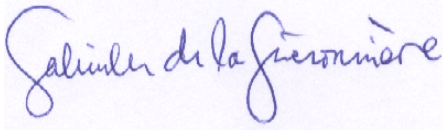
Thomas F. Welch
President
National Association for Justice Information Systems (NAJIS)



Ann M. Harkins
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Mai Fernandez
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National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC)



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Darla Bardine
Executive Director
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Steve Derene
Executive Director
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Robert J. Kasabian
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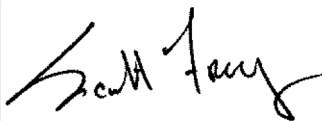
Melvin H. Wilson
Manager, Department of Social Justices and Human Rights
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)



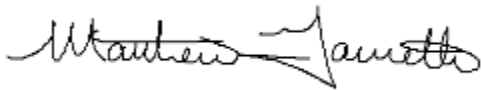
Carson Fox
CEO
National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP)



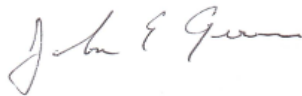
Ned Loughran
Executive Director
Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA)



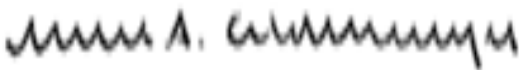
Scott Frey
Director of Federal Government Affairs
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Workers (AFSCME, AFL-CIO)



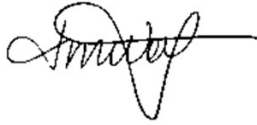
Matthew Gamette M.S., C.P.M.
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John Gerns MFS
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Dr. Bruce A. Goldberger PhD, F-ABFT
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Jodi Wolf M.S., M.B.A
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American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD)



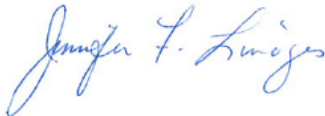
Dee Krebs MS, APRN, BC, FNP, SANE A/P, FAANP
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Bridget Lewis C.L.P.E.
President
International Association for Identification (IAI)



Dr. David Fowler MB.ChB. M.Med. Path (forens). FCAP. FAAFS
President
National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME)



Jennifer Limoges MS, DABC
President
Society of Forensic Toxicologists (SOFT)

cc: Senator Thad Cochran, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
Members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
Representative Hal Rogers, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
Representative Nita Lowey, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee
Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies