

March 10, 2020

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States Senate
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States Senate
506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable José Serrano
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
1203 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Moran, Ranking Member Shaheen, Chairman Serrano and Ranking Member Aderholt:

We, the undersigned national organizations representing a broad cross-section of the criminal and juvenile justice systems, thank you for your strong, consistent and thoughtful leadership on federal assistance for state, tribal and local data-driven criminal justice programming. In particular, we applaud your steadfast support for the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) program and respectfully request that the Fiscal Year 2021 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill continue to return funding to the program that has been lost in recent years.

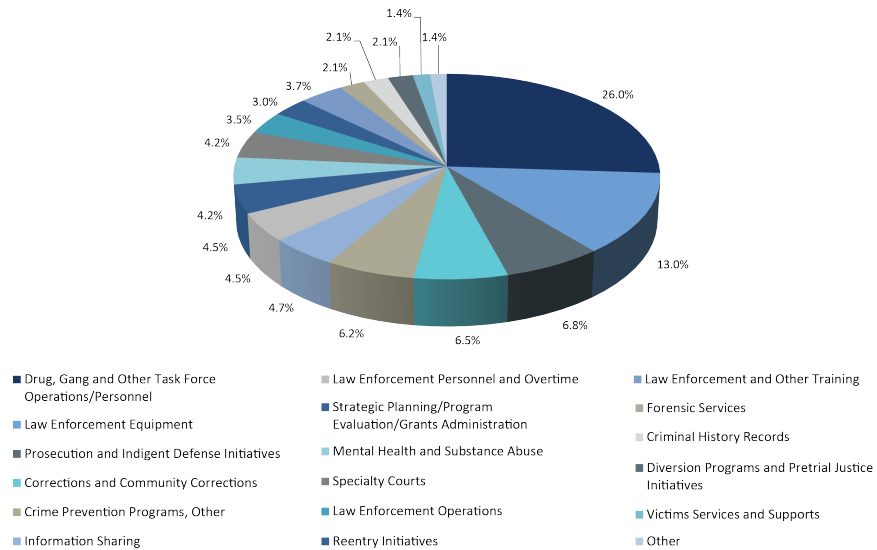
Byrne JAG is the cornerstone of the federal government's crucial role in spurring innovation, testing and replicating data-driven policies and practices nationwide, and delivering fair and effective justice systems across the country. Because Byrne JAG is flexible, states and local communities are able to use funding to address needs and fill gaps across the entire criminal and juvenile justice systems – in juvenile delinquency prevention, law enforcement, courts and specialty courts, prosecution and indigent defense, corrections, victim assistance, mental health services, reentry programs, and other practices to improve transparency and fairness in the justice system.

This flexibility is the hallmark and advantage of the Byrne JAG program. This flexibility also means that states can respond quickly to emerging needs and crises. For example, many states were able to pivot swiftly to efforts to right the crisis of opioid misuse. This flexibility also gives states and local governments a mechanism for working across systems to fill gaps. Byrne JAG is able to leverage other justice and public health funding to create programs that otherwise would be impossible within the constraints of other grant programs. This is helpful, even vital, when considering programs to divert the mentally ill from jail and to address the needs of justice-involved individuals with substance use disorders.

Byrne JAG grants also serve as a catalyst for collaboration within communities and across states, including the critical role multijurisdictional task forces play in targeting regional drug trafficking organizations. This cross-jurisdictional model is replicated in states to tackle other cross-boundary crimes, such as human trafficking and cybercrime, while saving money and increasing efficiency in the process.

The National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) gathers a wealth of information about how states and local governments allocate Byrne JAG funding to meet system needs through periodic surveys of the State Administering Agencies (SAAs). The chart below shows that Byrne JAG dollars are invested broadly across all segments of the criminal justice system.

Breakdown of Byrne JAG State Formula Grant Funding 2016



As illustrated by 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 recognize the competing pressures you face as you seek to prioritize funding for the many important programs in the CJS bill. Funding for Byrne JAG has been reduced by over one-third since FY10, causing a serious contraction in the reach of Byrne JAG-funded programs across the states and territories and hindering our ability to prevent and deter a rise in violent crime, to confront the opioid epidemic, to reduce recidivism, and to improve outcomes for individuals with addiction and mental illness who come into contact with the justice system. For these reasons we respectfully request a return to the FY10 funding of \$520 million for Byrne JAG in the FY21 CJS appropriations bill.

Thank you for your leadership and your steadfast commitment to the Byrne JAG program.

Sincerely,

Chris Kervick
President
National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA)

Matt Chase
Executive Director
National Association of Counties (NACo)



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



Peter J. Koutoujian
Sheriff, Middlesex County
President
Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA)



Art Acevedo
Chief, Houston Police Department
President
Major Cities Chiefs Association



Duffie Stone
President
National District Attorneys Association (NDAA)



Bob Bushman
President
National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC)



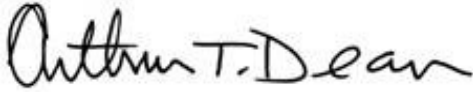
Clarence Anthony
CEO/ Executive Director
National League of Cities (NLC)



Megan Quattlebaum
Director
The CSG Justice Center (CSG)



Jessica Hulsey Nickel
President and CEO
Addiction Policy Forum



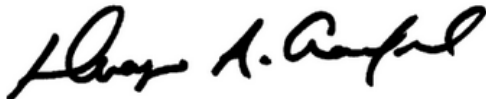
Arthur T. Dean
Major General, U.S. Army, Retired
Chairman and CEO
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)



Steve Woolworth
President
International Community Corrections Association (ICCA)



Kevin Kempf
Executive Director
Correctional Leaders Association (CLA)



Dwayne A. Crawford
Executive Director
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)



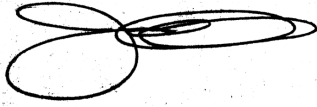
Bill Johnson
Executive Director
National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO)



Robert J. Kasabian
Executive Director
American Jail Association (AJA)



Mark Keel
President
Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies (ASCIA)



Jim Burch
President
National Police Foundation



Daisy Pagan
Executive Director
National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators (NAVAA)



Dan Eddy
Executive Director
National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards (NACVCB)



David LaBahn
President/CEO
Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (APA)



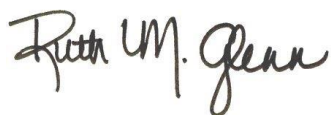
Carson Fox
Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP)



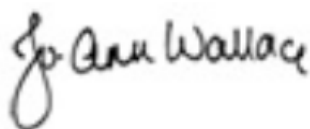
Charles P. Schoville
President
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Julie Abbate
National Advocacy Director
Just Detention International



Ruth Glenn
Executive Director
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV)



Jo-Ann Wallace
President and CEO
National Legal Aid and Defender Association (NLADA)



Kathy Park
CEO
National Council on Crime & Delinquency (NCCD)



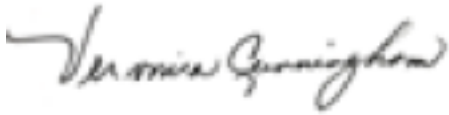
Claire Ponder Selib
Interim Executive Director
National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA)



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



Matt Josephs
Senior Vice President, Policy
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)



Veronica Cunningham
Executive Director
American Probation and Parole Association (APPA)



John Snook
Executive Director
Treatment Advocacy Center



Renee Williams
Executive Director
National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC)



Ann M. Harkins
President and CEO
National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)



Jeffrey Wennar
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David J. Roberts
Executive Director
SEARCH, The National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics



Kevin Hobson
President
National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies (NASDEA)




Cherise Fanno Burdeen
Executive Director
Pretrial Justice Institute (PJI)



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



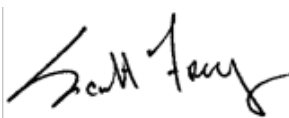
Joey Orduna Hastings
Chief Executive Officer
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ)



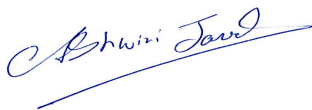
Marcy Mistrett
Chief Executive Officer
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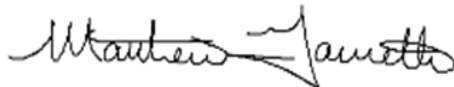
Naomi Evans
Executive Director
Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ)



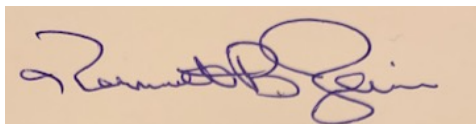
Scott Frey
Director of Federal Government Affairs
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Ashwini Jarral
Executive Director
IJIS Institute (IJIS)



Matthew Gamette
Chair
Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO)



Ken Zercie
President
International Association for Identification (IAI)



Sally Aiken, M.D.
President
National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME)



Sumandeep Rana, Ph.D.
President
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William Newman, M.D.
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Jeri Roper-Miller
President
American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS)

Copies to:

Senator Richard Shelby, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
Senator Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Committee
Members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
Representative Nita Lowey, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
Representative Kay Granger, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee
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