**SAA template letter to Members of Congress**

Date

The Honorable [*Name*]  
United States [*Senate/House of Representatives*]  
[Room and office building name]  
Washington, DC [*20515 for House; 20510 for Senate*]

Dear [*Senator/Representative*] \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

I write today to thank you for your leadership in the United States Congress and to tell you about the important role the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) program plays in protecting the public safety in our communities. 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 in [*state*] and nationwide.

Our Byrne JAG spending is guided by a statewide strategic plan developed in collaboration with our [*local law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, defenders, courts and corrections leaders*.] [*We have engaged in a concerted effort to increase investment in evidence-based programs and innovative strategies that we are measuring and analyzing for effectiveness, and that can be replicated in other communities*.]

In [*state*], Byrne JAG is invested principally in [*short description of the main thrust of Byrne JAG spending*].

Specifically, Byrne JAG is used to [*describe two or three key initiatives with results, if available, in one, or several, short paragraphs. Make sure to mention if the program is evidence-based or designed using analysis of crime statistics and trends*.]

[*Together with our Statistical Analysis Center and universities/other*], we measure performance and program success and oversee our local grantees’ performance and financial management.

Funding for Byrne JAG had been cut by one-third over the last decade. These reductions come with a cost, however, and impact our ability to continue proven programs and to test innovative new ideas that protect victims, prevent crime, reduce recidivism, and improve fairness in the justice system. We are grateful Congress has been able to restore some of the funding over the past several years. We respectfully request that funding for Byrne JAG continue to be restored in this year’s Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill.

We invite you or a member of your staff to learn more about our projects and how Byrne JAG is serving our communities and providing a substantial return on the investment. The results are remarkable and help explain why Byrne JAG is so broadly and enthusiastically support by the criminal justice community in [*state*].

We thank you again for your leadership and appreciate this opportunity to share our experience with the Byrne JAG program.

Sincerely,