

April 12, 2019

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 and 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 evidence-based 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 2020 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill begin to return funding to the program that has been lost in recent years.

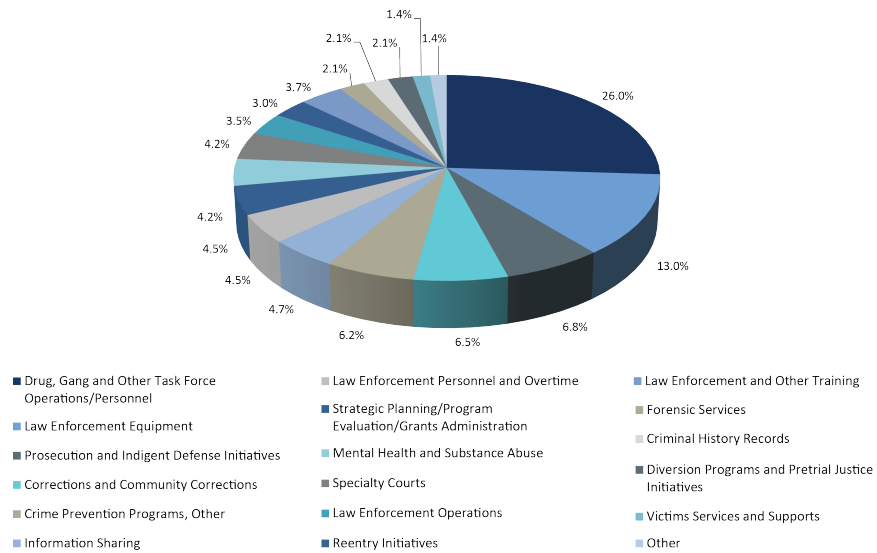
Byrne JAG is the cornerstone federal crime-fighting program, supporting the federal government's crucial role in spurring innovation, as well as testing and replicating evidence-based practices nationwide. Because Byrne JAG is flexible, states and local communities are able to use funding to address 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 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 the prevention, treatment and recovery from opioid addiction. 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 may 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 the justice-involved with substance use disorders.

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 cross-jurisdictional model is being 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). From the most recent survey, we know that Byrne JAG dollars were invested broadly across all segments of the criminal justice system in FY16, as illustrated in the chart below.

Breakdown of Byrne JAG State Formula Grant Funding 2016



As illustrated by the wide-range of 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. Yet funding for Byrne JAG has been reduced by 35 percent 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 FY20 CJS appropriations bill.

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

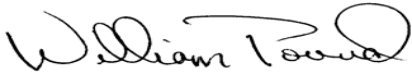
Sincerely,

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)



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



Sheriff Grady Judd
President
Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA)



Art Acevedo
President
Major City Chiefs Association (MCAA)



Jonathan W. Blodgett
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
Executive Director
Council of State Governments Justice Center (CSG)



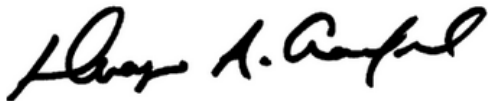
Jessica Nickel
President and CEO
Addiction Policy Forum



Ellen Donnarumma
President
International Community Corrections Association (ICCA)



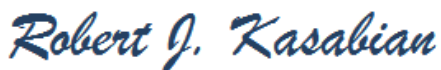
Kevin Kempf
Executive Director
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Executive Director
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE)



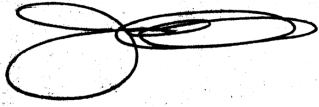
Bill Johnson
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National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO)



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



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



Jim Burch
President
Police Foundation



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



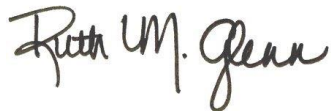
Dan Eddy
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National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards (NACVCB)



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National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP)



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National Legal Aid and Defender Association (NLADA)

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

Pamela F. Rodriguez
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Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC), Illinois

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Chief Executive Officer
American Psychological Association (APA)



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

Veronica Cunningham

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



Frankie Berger
Director of Advocacy
Treatment Advocacy Center

Camille Cooper

Camille Cooper
Vice President of Public Policy
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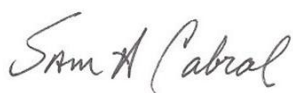
Mai Fernandez
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National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)

Jeffrey Wennar

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Julia Fuller-Wilson

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President
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Joey Orduna Hastings

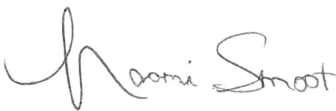
Joey Orduna Hastings
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Sarah Bryer
President and Executive Director
National Juvenile Justice Network (NJJN)



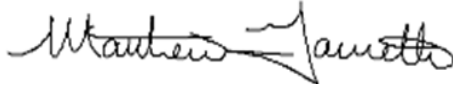
Marcy Mistrett
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Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ)



Ashwini Jarral
Executive Director
IJIS Institute (IJIS)



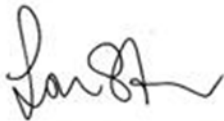
Matthew Gamette
Chair
Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO)



Kim Ball
Director and Research Professor
Justice Programs Office, School of Public Affairs, American University (JPO at AU)



Stacie Rumenap
President
Stop Child Predators



Lovisa Stannow
Executive Director
Just Detention International (JDI)

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
Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies