

April 10, 2017

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Culberson
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable José Serrano
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Cochran, Shelby, Culberson, Frelinghuysen, and Ranking Members Leahy, Shaheen, Lowey, and Serrano:

The undersigned organizations urge you to protect and sustain funding for the key justice assistance grant programs within the Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Office of Violence Against Women, and COPS Office in the final FY17 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies appropriations bill. Each of these programs supports the federal government's crucial role in spurring innovation, as well as testing and replicating evidence-based practices nationwide.

Federal funding to support such programming has declined steeply in recent years. Since FY10, the state and local justice assistance grant programs have been cut by up to 40 percent, with several programs cut much more deeply. These reductions come at a cost; many proven programs and new innovations to protect victims, prevent crime, and reduce recidivism are being curbed or eliminated entirely. Further, reductions in these programs would put public safety at risk and retreat from Congress's commitments to funding programs that improve state and local justice systems, advance best practices, reduce costs, and help achieve an effective balanced justice system overall.

The criminal justice system can only be successful and fair if all parts of the system – prevention, enforcement, courts, corrections, victim assistance, and community-based interventions and supports – are in balance, utilize effective strategies, and measure performance. Furthermore these innovations have led to a reduction in homicides and rape kit backlogs; specialized victims services; an effective collaboration between victim service providers and law enforcement; and a range of programs to improve outcomes related to reentry,

youth justice, wrongful conviction, mental illness and addiction, and other challenges faced by communities nationwide.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration of this very important issue. We look forward to working with you as the budget and appropriations process moves forward this year.

Sincerely,

American College of Nurse-Midwives
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American Jail Association
American Probation and Parole Association
American Psychological Association
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
Association of Prosecuting Attorneys
Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies
Association of VAWA Administrators
Break the Cycle
Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network
Campaign for Youth Justice
Center for Children's Law and Policy
Center for Community Alternatives
Center for Court Innovation
Center for Juvenile Justice Reform, Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations
Council for Juvenile Justice
CURE (Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants)
Daughters of Penelope
FreeFrom
Futures Without Violence
IJIS Institute
Innocence Project
International Community Corrections Association
International Union of Police Associations
Joyful Heart Foundation
Justice Programs Office, School of Public Affairs, American University
Learning Disabilities Association of America
Local Initiatives Support Corporation
Major County Sheriffs of America
NAACP
National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations
National Association of Counties
National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards
National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies
National Association of Social Workers
National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors

9to5, National Association of Working Women
National Center for Victims of Crime
National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women
National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs
National Conference of State Legislatures
National Congress of American Indians
National Council of Churches
National Council of Jewish Women
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
National Crime Victim Law Institute
National Criminal Justice Association
National Crittenton Foundation
National District Attorneys Association
National Domestic Violence Hotline
National Employment Law Project
National Legal Aid and Defender Association
National Network to End Domestic Violence
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
National Sheriffs Association
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Pretrial Justice Institute
Rights4Girls
School Social Work Association of America
SEARCH
Southwest Key Programs
SparkAction
Stop Child Predators
Stop It Now!
The Constitution Project
Treatment Communities of America
Ujima: The National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community
Victim Rights Law Center