

April 15, 2019

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

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

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Chairwoman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable José Serrano  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Shelby and Moran, Chairwoman Lowey, Chairman Serrano, Vice Chairman Leahy, and Ranking Members Shaheen, Granger, and Aderholt:

The undersigned organizations urge you to protect and sustain funding for key justice assistance grant programs within the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Office of Justice Programs, Office of Violence Against Women, and COPS Office in the FY20 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill by reaching a bipartisan FY20 budget cap agreement that raises the caps, and by ensuring a robust 302(b) allocation for the FY20 CJS bill.

The organizations listed below represent stakeholders from across the justice system – including states, counties, municipalities, and organizations that work on juvenile justice, crime prevention, law enforcement, victim services, prosecution, indigent defense, problem solving courts, behavioral health treatment, corrections and community corrections, justice system reform, and reentry, as well as those that represent justice system-involved individuals and families. We know first-hand that federal justice assistance grant programs have helped secure cost savings and changes in federal, state, and local criminal justice policy. Justice assistance grants have spurred innovations and initiatives replicated by federal agencies and jurisdictions nationwide.

In recent years, federal funding for these important grant programs has declined steeply. Since FY10, or passage of the Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA), funding for state and local justice assistance grant programs has been cut by up to 40 percent. These reductions impose harmful limits on the federal government's crucial role in testing and replicating evidence-based approaches and advancing justice system reform.

As Congress faces return of the BCA's automatic spending cuts, we urge you to negotiate a new budget agreement that averts these cuts and provides additional funding overall and for the FY20 CJS bill to support new investments that would help expand effective programs as well as help achieve bipartisan criminal justice reform. Over the past six years, Congress routinely has reached bipartisan budget agreements that have reduced the BCA's harmful sequestration cuts. Without a new FY20 budget agreement, overall non-defense discretionary (NDD) funding would fall by 12 percent (adjusting for inflation) compared to fiscal 2019 levels. Since FY10, DOJ grant programs have contributed almost \$1.5 billion to deficit reduction and these programs often have suffered deeper percentage cuts than other NDD programs. Our nation's criminal justice system is shouldering the costly burden of responding to a national health and mental health crisis. Further cuts in funding will significantly set back the progress made over the past several years in addressing these needs, as well as advancing juvenile justice reform and reducing recidivism. These funding cuts have a direct impact on public safety and slow progress towards implementing bipartisan criminal justice reform 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 Jail Association  
American Probation and Parole Association  
American Psychological Association  
Association of Prosecuting Attorneys  
Campaign for Youth Justice  
Center for Children's Law and Policy  
Children's Advocacy Institute  
Coalition for Juvenile Justice  
College & Community Fellowship  
District 3 Drug and Violent Crimes Task Force, Atulsa, Oklahoma  
District 19 District Attorney's Office, Durant, Oklahoma  
District 23 Drug and Violent Crimes Task Force, Shawnee, Oklahoma  
District 27 Drug and Violent Crimes Task Force, Sallisaw, Oklahoma  
District Attorney #25, Okmulgee, Oklahoma  
District Attorney's Office, Eufaula, Oklahoma  
District Attorneys Council, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
District of Columbia Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants  
District Three District Attorney, Oklahoma  
Eufaula Police Department, Oklahoma  
Futures Without Violence  
Guthrie Police Department, Oklahoma  
Harmon County Sheriff's Office, Oklahoma  
Healthy Teen Network  
Innocence Project

Interfaith Action for Human Rights  
Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Oklahoma  
Justice for Families  
Justice Innovations  
Justice Roundtable  
JustLeadership USA  
Juvenile Justice Coalition, Ohio  
Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, Oklahoma  
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)  
Major Cities Chiefs Association  
Major County Sheriffs of America  
Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance  
McIntosh County Jail, Oklahoma  
McIntosh County Sheriff's Office, Oklahoma  
Montana Board of Crime Control  
Morris Oklahoma Police Department  
NAACP  
National Association of Counties (NACo)  
National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies (NAPSA)  
National Network for Youth  
National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors  
National Association of VOCA Assistance Administration (NAVAA)  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges  
National Crime Prevention Council  
National Criminal Justice Association  
National Crittenton  
National District Attorneys Association  
National Legal Aid & Defender Association  
National Resource Center on Domestic Violence  
North Dakota Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation  
Office of the District Attorney, District 12, Claremore, Oklahoma  
Oklahoma Department of Corrections  
Oklahoma District Attorneys Council  
Okmulgee County District Attorney's Office, Oklahoma  
Pretrial Justice Institute  
Safenet Services, Inc.  
Safer Foundation  
School Social Work Association of America  
SEARCH, The National Consortium for Justice Information and Statistics  
StoptheDrugWar.org  
The Daniel Initiative  
Treatment Communities of America  
True Colors United  
Tulsa County District Attorney's Office, Oklahoma  
W. Haywood Burns Institute