

April 22, 2022

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

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

The Honorable Matt Cartwright
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
2102 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 Chairwoman Shaheen, Ranking Member Moran, Chairman Cartwright and Ranking Member Aderholt:

We, the undersigned national organizations representing a broad cross-section of the criminal and juvenile justice systems and impacted communities, thank you for your strong, consistent and thoughtful leadership on federal assistance to strengthen and improve state, tribal and local justice systems. In particular, we thank you for your steadfast support for the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) program and respectfully request that the Fiscal Year 2023 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill continue to restore funding the program had lost in recent years.

Byrne JAG is the cornerstone federal justice assistance grant program. It is one of the most important tools states and localities have for spurring innovation and for testing and replicating promising practices that make our justice systems more responsive to the needs of their communities. Because Byrne JAG is distributed by formula, it reaches every state and a broad cross-section of local communities, from large urban areas to smaller townships and rural counties. Due to Byrne JAG's flexibility, grantees use these funds to address their most pressing needs as well as to fill gaps across the entire justice system – for crime and violence prevention, law enforcement, courts, specialty courts, prosecution, indigent defense, corrections, community corrections, alternatives to incarceration, mental health and substance use disorder treatment and services, as well as a wide array of reentry programs.

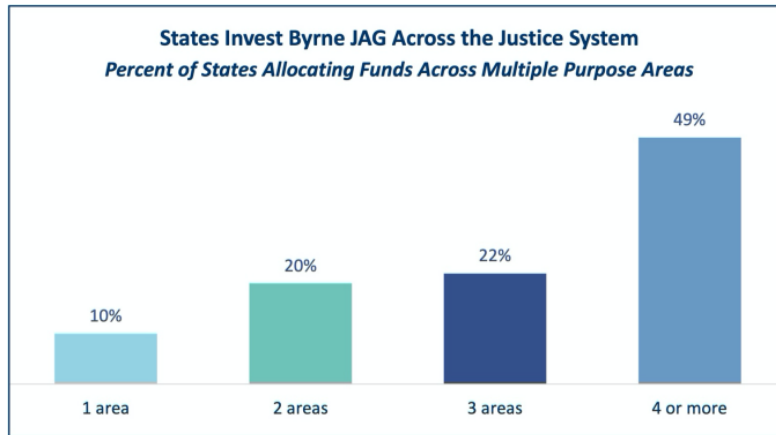
This flexibility is the hallmark and advantage of the Byrne JAG program. It allows states to respond quickly to emerging needs and crises. It also means that states and localities can work across systems. This is helpful, even necessary, when considering alternative-to-incarceration programs, particularly for people with mental health and substance use disorders.

Byrne JAG is a critical resource for stemming rising violence in urban and rural communities across the country. The funds provide law enforcement agencies, prosecutors and public defenders with resources to implement innovative approaches, such as violence prevention and intervention initiatives, to improve the criminal justice system and build trust within their communities. The grants also allow law enforcement and prosecutor collaboration within communities and across states to target regional drug trafficking organizations and other cross-boundary crimes.

According to a recent Bureau of Justice Assistance [blog post](#), “The program has supported and promoted improvements in every aspect of the justice system, from policing to prosecution and public defense, to corrections and reentry from incarceration. Its impact on advancing public safety and equal justice has been consequential.... It is impossible to describe a ‘typical’ program that is supported by Byrne JAG grants because the

program intentionally rejects a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, public safety agencies design and submit plans that address the unique challenges facing their communities...[have] latitude to innovate.”

Since 2005, states and localities have been awarded more than 22,000 grants totaling more than \$7 billion. The National Criminal Justice Association gathers a wealth of information about how the state formula grants are invested through periodic surveys of the State Administering Agencies (SAAs). The statute describes the justice system in eight Purpose Areas. The chart below shows that in 2018 nearly every SAA invested in at least three purpose areas, and nearly half invested in four or more, extending the reach of program dollars across the justice system. Examples of how states invest Byrne JAG funds can be found at <https://www.ncja.org/data-on-how-states-invest-byrne-jag> and through the NCJA Podcast at <https://www.ncja.org/the-ncja-podcast>.



As evidenced by the signatures below, Byrne JAG has the broad support of a dedicated coalition of national organizations from across the criminal and juvenile justice systems, including impacted communities. We recognize the central role Byrne JAG plays in preventing victimization, supporting innovative law enforcement practices, advancing the fair administration of and access to justice, serving and protecting crime victims, improving outcomes for the justice-involved, interrupting the cycle of crime, 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 was reduced by over one-third over several years beginning in FY10 which caused a serious contraction in the reach of Byrne JAG-funded programs. We are grateful for steady increases in the past several years. For these reasons we respectfully request a return to the FY10 funding of \$520 million for Byrne JAG in the Fiscal Year 2023 CJS appropriations bill.

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

Sincerely,

Jessica Hulsey
President and CEO
Addiction Policy Forum (APF)

Chris Daniels
Executive Director
American Jail Association (AJA)



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



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



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

Barry Bryant

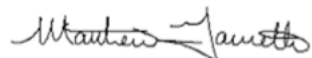
Barry Bryant
Executive Director
Association of VAWA Administrators (AVA)



Naomi Evans
Executive Director
Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ)

Barrye L. Price

Barrye L. Price, Ph.D.
Major General, US Army Retired
President and CEO
Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)



Matthew Gamette
Chair
Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations (CFSO) on behalf of its members:
American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS)
American Board of Forensic Toxicology (ABFT)
American Society of Crime Lab Directors (ASCLD)
International Association for Identification (IAI)
National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME)
Society of Forensic Toxicologists (SOFT)




Anne Precythe
President
Correctional Leaders Association (CLA)



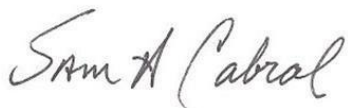
Megan Quattlebaum
Director
The CSG Justice Center (CSG)




Michael Becar
Executive Director
International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST)



Elisa Lopez-Canseco
President
International Community Corrections Association (ICCA)



Sam A. Cabral
International President
International Union of Police Associations (IUPA)



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



Laura Cooper
Executive Director
Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA)



Dennis Lemma
Sheriff, Seminole County, Florida
President
Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA)

Jeffrey Wennar

Jeffrey Wennar
Executive Director
National Alliance of Gang Investigators Associations (NAGIA)



Kevin Hobson
Lieutenant Colonel, Indiana State Police
President,
National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies (NASDEA)



Hannah Wesolowski
Chief Advocacy Officer
NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness



Matthew D. Chase
CEO/Executive Director
National Association of Counties (NACo)



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



William J. Johnson
Executive Director
National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO)



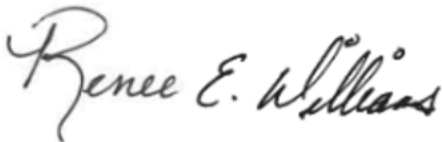
Jim Sawyer
Executive Director
National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies (NAPSA)




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



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



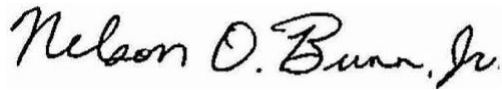
Renee Williams
Executive Director
National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC)



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



Chris Asplen
Executive Director
National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA)



Nelson Bunn
Executive Director
National District Attorneys Association (NDAA)



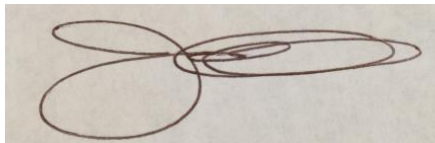
Clarence Anthony
CEO/ Executive Director
National League of Cities (NLC)



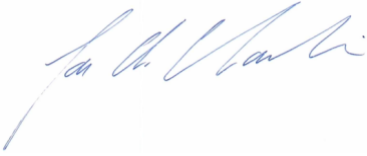
Bob Bushman
President
National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC)



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



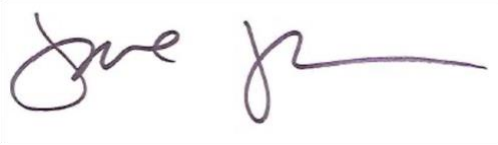
Jim Burch
President
National Police Foundation



Jac A. Charlier
Executive Director
Police, Treatment, and Community Collaborative (PTACC)



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



Joel K. Johnson
President and CEO
TASC, Inc. (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities)



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