



# NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

January 3, 2011

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Leahy,

On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) and the 3,083 elected sheriffs nationwide, I am writing to express our support of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act.

This reauthorization bill is critical as it continues to enhance and protect the rights of crime victims throughout the United States. The Justice for All Reauthorization Act would ensure that crime victims are informed of rights and are provided the appropriate contact for the Office of the Victims' Rights Ombudsman of the Department of Justice (DOJ); would expand eligibility for post-conviction DNA testing in criminal proceedings other than death penalty cases; would enhance the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program to help eliminate the DNA backlog nationwide; would further help victims of sexual assault by requiring that they are notified of the availability of free rape exams; and would increase funding for the Paul Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Grant Program.

Moreover, the legislation will reinstate the Byrne JAG Program requirement that states develop, and annually update, strategic plans. These plans would require detailed outlines as to how the Byrne JAG funds would be used to improve the administration of criminal justice. Strategic plans would be developed in consultation with local governments as well as all sectors of the criminal justice system. Such a requirement will not only enable states to effectively demonstrate what programs Byrne JAG funds statewide, but also how important Byrne JAG funding is to a multitude of criminal justice programs throughout each state.

Finally, the bill will reauthorize funding at current levels for the Crime Victims Legal Assistance Grants and the Crime Victims Notification Grants. Both grants programs have been invaluable in ensuring crime victims receive the help and support they need in regards to their cases throughout the duration of the legal process.

It is crucial that the criminal justice system continues to protect the rights of crime victims. Senator Leahy, I applaud your efforts to preserve and enhance these rights, and for being a champion of crime victims nationwide. The National Sheriffs' Association stands ready to assist you in the passage of the Justice for All Reauthorization Act during the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B.J. Roberts". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sheriff B.J. Roberts  
President