

March 21, 2014

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
503 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Wolf
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
241 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chaka Fattah
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
2301 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Mikulski and Shelby and Congressmen Wolf and Fattah:

We, the undersigned national groups representing a broad cross-section of the criminal and juvenile justice systems, thank you for your strong, consistent and thoughtful leadership in the United States Congress on federal assistance to state and local evidence-based criminal justice programming, in particular the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG). We recognize the many competing pressures upon you as you seek to prioritize funding for many important programs in the Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) bill. As you know, funding for the Byrne JAG program has been reduced by over one-third since FY10, causing a serious contraction in the reach of Byrne JAG-funded programs across the states and territories. We are very grateful to you for sparing the program from further cuts in the FY13 Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act and for limiting the cuts in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of FY14. We write today to respectfully ask that Byrne JAG be supported, at least, at level funding in the FY15 appropriations bill.

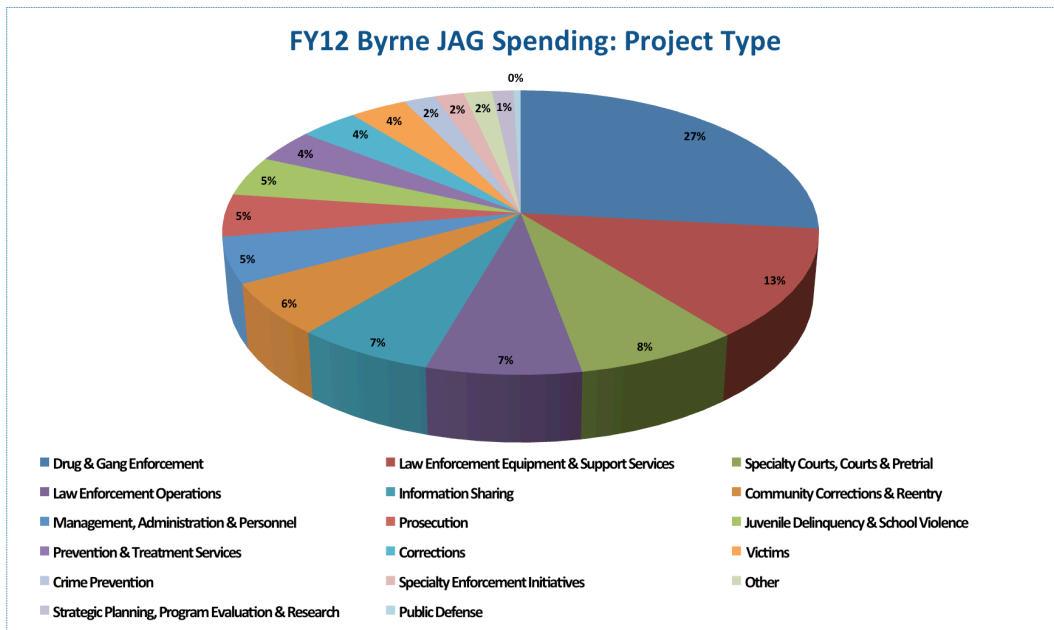
Byrne JAG is the cornerstone federal crime-fighting program, supporting the federal government's crucial role in spurring innovation, as well as testing and replicating evidence-based practices nationwide. States and localities use Byrne JAG to test emerging and evidence-based approaches to the public safety challenges in their jurisdictions. Because Byrne JAG is flexible, states and local communities are able to use funding to address needs and fill gaps across the entire criminal justice system – in prevention, enforcement, courts, prosecution and indigent defense, corrections, victim assistance, and other community support. This flexibility is the hallmark of the Byrne JAG program and is vitally important because when the criminal justice system is in balance, the system functions with efficiency and effectiveness.

In most states, the state formula grant awards are made using a peer-reviewed, competitive application process based on a statewide strategic plan developed in conjunction with the state's system stakeholders. In partnership with the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs (OJP), the SAAs are engaged in a concerted strategy to increase investment in evidence-based and research-driven programs and innovative strategies and practices that are measured and can be replicated. Because of these efforts, Byrne JAG is advancing the evidence-based practices movement within the criminal justice field at a remarkable pace.

Byrne JAG grants have also been the catalyst for building collaboration within communities and across states, including the critical role multijurisdictional drug task forces play in targeting regional drug trafficking organizations. This task force model is now being replicated in states across the country to tackle other cross-boundary crimes, such as human trafficking and cyber crime, while saving money and increasing efficiency in the process.

The National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) periodically surveys the State Administering Agencies (SAAs), gathering a wealth of information about how states and local governments allocate Byrne JAG funding to meet

system needs. From that survey, we know that Byrne JAG dollars were invested broadly across all segments of the criminal justice system in FY12, as depicted in the chart below.



Byrne JAG is supported by a broad and dedicated coalition of national organizations from across the criminal justice system. We come together on this letter recognizing 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 deeply appreciate your leadership in fighting for a strong, vibrant Byrne JAG program. We thank you for your steadfast support and respectfully request that Byrne JAG is protected from further cuts in FY15.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

Jack Cutrone
 President
 National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA)

Donny Youngblood
 President
 Major County Sheriffs' Association (MCSA)



Aaron Kennard
Executive Director
National Sheriffs Association (NSA)



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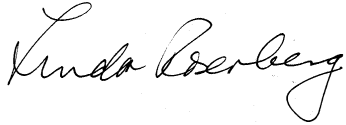
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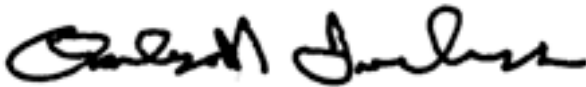
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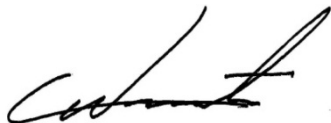
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Robert J. Kasabian

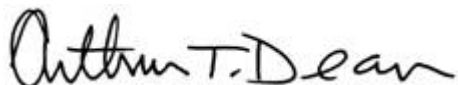
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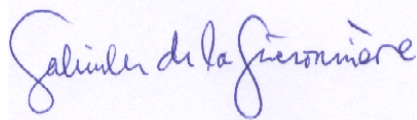
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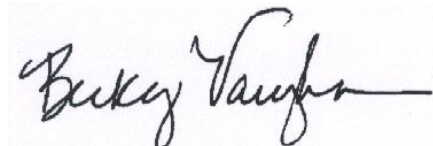
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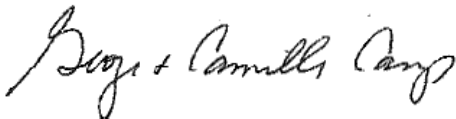
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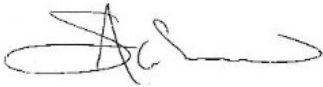
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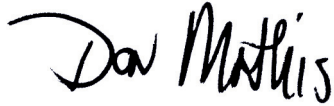
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Pat Beauchemin

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Executive Director
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Scott Berkowitz
President
Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)



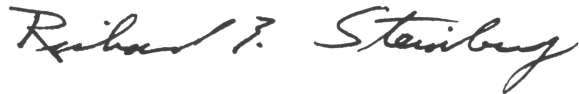
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Kyle Marquart, Captain
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Darla Bardine
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Richard E. Steinberg
President and CEO
WestCare Foundation

cc: Members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
Representative Hal Rogers, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
Representative Nita Lowey, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee
Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies