



# NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

AARON D. KENNARD  
Executive Director

September 16, 2013

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy  
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Leahy:

On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) and the more than 3,000 elected Sheriffs nationwide, I write to express our support for S. 822, the *Justice for All Reauthorization Act of 2013*.

The *Justice for All Reauthorization Act* would reauthorize appropriations through FY 2018 for grant programs to: ensure that crime victims are informed of their rights and provided with the contact for the Department of Justice's Office of the Victims' Rights Ombudsman; expand eligibility for post-conviction DNA testing in criminal proceedings other than death penalty cases; enhance the Debbie Smith DNA Backlog Grant Program to help eliminate the backlog nationwide; further help victims of sexual assault by requiring that they are notified of the availability of free rape exams; aid in the identification of missing persons; improve the quality of legal representation for indigent defendants in capital cases; and increase funding for the Paul Coverdell Forensic Sciences Improvement Grant Program.

Furthermore, the *Act* would reinstate the Byrne JAG Program requirement that States develop and annually update – in consultation with local governments as well as all sectors of the criminal justice system – strategic plans that detail how Byrne JAG funds would be used to improve the administration of criminal justice. Additionally, it would reauthorize funding for the Crime Victims Legal Assistance Grants and the Crime Victims Notification Grants, both of which have been invaluable in ensuring that victims receive the support they need throughout the legal process. And, finally, the *Act* would require that the Director of the National Institute of Justice establish best practices for evidence retention and especially on the preservation of biological evidence.

In closing, it is crucial that the criminal justice system protects the rights of crime victims, and NSA applauds your efforts to preserve and enhance these rights. We thank you for being a champion of crime victims nationwide and look forward to working with you on passage of the *Justice for All Reauthorization Act*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Aaron D. Kennard".

Sheriff (ret.) Aaron D. Kennard  
Executive Director