

March 12, 2026

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

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States Senate
730 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
2406 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Grace Meng
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Moran, Ranking Member Van Hollen, Chair Rogers and Ranking Member Meng:

We, the undersigned national organizations representing a broad cross-section of the criminal 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 2027 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) appropriations bill continue to restore funding the program has 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 keep people safe. 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.

Flexibility is the hallmark and advantage of the Byrne JAG program. Communities 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, public defense, corrections, community corrections, alternatives to incarceration, immigration control, crisis response, as well as a wide array of reentry programs. This flexibility also allows states and localities to work across systems, which is necessary when considering alternative-to-incarceration programs for people with mental health and substance use disorders.

Byrne JAG is a critical resource for preventing and responding to violent crime in rural and urban communities. State and local law enforcement agencies use Byrne JAG to respond quickly to new and emerging public safety challenges in their communities and augment cross-agency responses to regional crime, including drug, violent crime, anti-gang and anti-human trafficking efforts. The funds provide law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, public defenders and others with resources to enhance operations and share information, adopt prevention and diversion strategies and purchase needed equipment and diagnostic tools.

To learn more about the difference Byrne JAG makes across the country, read the National Criminal Justice Association report: [The Byrne JAG Program: Leading Change in State and Local Justice Systems](#).

In addition, the [Law Enforcement De-Escalation Training Act](#), which passed Congress in December 2022, will allow law enforcement agencies and mental health responders, particularly in smaller communities, to access high-quality training at no additional cost to them. Funding is needed to continue implementation efforts.

As evidenced by the signatories below, Byrne JAG has the broad support of a dedicated coalition of national organizations from across the criminal justice systems. We recognize the central role Byrne JAG plays in preventing victimization, supporting effective law enforcement, serving and protecting crime victims, improving outcomes for people in the justice system, interrupting the cycle of crime and leveraging other resources to keep our people safe.

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 the steady increases in funding over the past several years and respectfully request that the Fiscal Year 2027 CJS appropriations bill continue on pace to return to the FY10 funding of \$520 million for the Byrne JAG formula program, plus additional funding for the Law Enforcement De-escalation Training Act grant program.

Sincerely,



Jessica Hulsey
President and CEO
Addiction Policy Forum



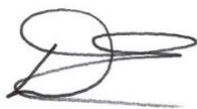
Carson Fox
Chief Executive Officer
AllRise



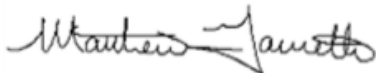
Rob Green
Executive Director
American Correctional Association



David LaBahn
President/CEO
Association of Prosecuting Attorneys



Andrew Evans
President
Association of State Criminal Investigative Agencies



Matthew Gamette

Chair

Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations on behalf of its members:

American Academy of Forensic Sciences
American Board of Forensic Toxicology
American Society of Crime Lab Directors
International Association for Identification
National Association of Medical Examiners
Society of Forensic Toxicologists



Kevin Kempf

Executive Director

Correctional Leaders Association



Marshall Clement

Director

Council of State Governments Justice Center



Maria M. Cardiello

Executive Director

IJS Institute



David B. Rausch

President

International Association of Chiefs of Police



Brian Grisham

Executive Director

International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training



Michael Randle
President
International Community Justice Association



David Downey
President/CEO
International Downtown Association



Sam A. Cabral
International President
International Union of Police Associations



James Baker
Advisory Board Chair
Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime & Incarceration



Matt Josephs
Senior Vice President, Policy
Local Initiatives Support Corporation



Laura Cooper
Executive Director
Major Cities Chiefs Association



Sheriff Bob Gualtieri
President
Major County Sheriffs of America



John Snook
Chief Policy Officer
Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute



Carlon Stapleton
Executive Director
National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies



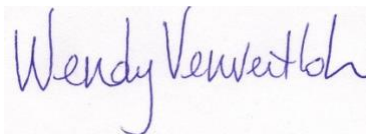
Hannah Wesolowski
Chief Advocacy Officer
National Alliance on Mental Illness



Jonah C. Cunningham
President/CEO
National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors



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



Wendy Venvertloh
Executive Director
National Association of Pretrial Service Agencies



Jonah C. Cunningham
Executive Director
National Association for Rural Mental Health



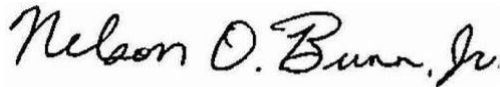
Robert L. Morrison
Executive Director
National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors



Tim Storey
Executive Director
National Conference of State Legislatures



Chris Asplen
Executive Director
National Criminal Justice Association



Nelson Bunn
Executive Director
National District Attorneys Association



Clarence Anthony
CEO/Executive Director
National League of Cities



Tony Kestner
President
National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition



Claire Ponder Selib
Executive Director
National Organization for Victim Advocacy



James Burch
President
National Policing Institute



Libby Jones
Associate Vice President
Overdose Prevention Initiative at the Global Health Advocacy Incubator



Jac A. Charlier
CEO
Police, Treatment, and Community Collaborative



Yasmin Vafa, Esq.
Executive Director
Rights4Girls



Derek Veitenheimer
Executive Director
SEARCH

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Joel K. Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joel K. Johnson
President and CEO
Treatment Alternatives for Stronger Communities

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Cochran', with a stylized, cursive script.

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

cc:

The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee
Members of the Senate Appropriations Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Subcommittee Members
of the House Appropriations Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Subcommittee