



March 25, 2019

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science and Related Agencies  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable José Serrano  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Moran and Serrano and Ranking Members Shaheen and Aderholt:

On behalf of the Act 4 JJ Coalition, a broad network of organizations representing states, territories and the District of Columbia, we are writing to express how important it is to fully fund critical juvenile justice and delinquency prevention programs for Fiscal Year 2020. **Federal investments play an essential role in state juvenile justice efforts to protect youth, prevent delinquency, and promote safe communities.** This was affirmed by Congress when it reauthorized the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP) at the end of the 115th Congress.<sup>1</sup> The reauthorization brings this critical federal law up to date with evidence-based practices, research, and progress made in states across the country.

Under the newly reauthorized law, states are being asked to do more to receive their federal formula grants under Title II of the Act<sup>2</sup>, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is also required to provide additional technical assistance to states and key stakeholders, as well as produce more research. Despite these requirements, overall federal support of key juvenile justice programs has declined by more than half since the last reauthorization in 2002, and we are concerned about the impact that any further reductions in

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<sup>1</sup> Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2017, H.R. 1809, 115th Cong. (1st Sess. 2017).

<sup>2</sup> COALITION FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE, JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION ACT: STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS (Jan. 2018), available at <http://www.act4jj.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/State%20Plans%20H.R.%206964%20JJDP.pdf>; ACT 4 JUVENILE JUSTICE, OVERVIEW OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM ACT OF 2018 (Dec. 2018), available at <http://www.act4jj.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/JJDP%20Reauthorization%20Summary%20December%202018.pdf>.

funding would have on states' ability to serve youth.<sup>3</sup> We are writing to ask you to include adequate funding for critical juvenile justice and delinquency prevention programs in the Fiscal Year 2020 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) Appropriations bill. As leaders on the CJS Appropriations bill, we encourage you to work to secure the highest 302(b) allocation possible, and within that amount, we ask that you support the following:

***Require full implementation of the JJDPA by appropriating \$176 million dollars for Titles II & V of the Act in FY20 budget, including:***

- **\$80,000,000** to carry out programs under the Charles Grassley Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Program, Title II of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, as authorized by the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018;
  - of which not more than 5% goes to provide training and technical assistance to states; and
  - of which not more than 10% goes to support research conducted by OJJDP.

Title II of JJDPA provides federal funding to states to promote delinquency prevention and assist them to comply with federally-mandated core requirements designed to protect children from the dangers of placement in adult jails and lockups; keep status offenders/non-delinquent children out of locked custody; and address the racial and ethnic disparities faced by youth of color in the justice system.

- **\$96,053,401** to carry out programs under in the Incentive Youth Promise Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs Act of 2018, Title V of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, as authorized by the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018;
  - of which, 11% goes to support the Tribal Youth Program; and
  - the remaining \$86.4 million goes to support the Title V PROMISE grants.

Title V is the only federal program that provides delinquency prevention funding at the local level to reach at-risk youth and help keep them out of the juvenile justice system. The Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 renames this title “Incentive Grants for Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support, and Education (PROMISE)” and expands the uses of this grant program to include 29 funding areas, and establishes local youth councils to develop prevention programming that ensures needs of at-risk youth are being met.

Tribal Youth are over-represented in state and local delinquency systems. The Juvenile Justice Reform Act provides an increased percentage in Title V funding for Tribal Youth Programs to ensure Tribes are able to invest in traditionally-grounded, trauma-based delinquency prevention programs.

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<sup>3</sup> ACT 4 JUVENILE JUSTICE, JUVENILE JUSTICE FEDERAL FUNDING CHART (2019), *available at* <http://www.act4jj.org/sites/default/files/ckfinder/files/Appropriation%20Chart%20FY17%20updated.pdf>.

In addition, we urge you to include funding for additional juvenile justice programs, including:

- **\$30,000,000** for the Tiffany Josyln Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Reauthorization and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Act of 2019 (H.R. 494), as passed by unanimous consent the U.S. House of Representatives in the 115th and 116th Congress.<sup>4</sup>

Historic funding through the JABG program has supported state efforts to effectively strengthen supports for court-involved youth. These funds support vital state efforts to effectively strengthen juvenile court services, such as behavioral health screening and assessment for court-involved youth and alternatives to detention.

*The JJDPA has been so successful that 47 states and 6 U.S. territories participate in this voluntary program*, yet cuts to these programs have weakened the federal-state partnership and stymied national, state, and local progress in this area. Many states have already had to significantly reduce services. Further cuts would inhibit the improvements made by the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 and result in fewer youth having access to services designed to keep them from engaging in unlawful behaviors and penetrating deeper into the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

It is critical that Congress fully fund these programs as authorized by the Juvenile Justice Reform Act in order for implementation of the new requirements of the law to be successful. Congress must affirm this important federal-state partnership to protect children and to invest in innovative and cost-effective reforms that keep youth out of trouble and communities safe. The Act 4 JJ Coalition urges you to consider these critical supports for youth and communities in this year's CJS Appropriations bill.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

African American Ministers In Action  
Afterschool Alliance  
American Civil Liberties Union  
American Psychological Association  
Boys Town  
Campaign for Youth Justice  
CASA of the Tenth Judicial Circuit  
Center for Children's Law and Policy  
Center for Law and Social Policy  
Center on Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice, Rutgers University  
Child Welfare League of America  
Children's Defense Fund  
Children's Advocacy Institute

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<sup>4</sup>Tiffany Josyln Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Reauthorization and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Act of 2019, H.R. 494, 116th Cong. (2019).

Citizens for Juvenile Justice  
Coalition for Juvenile Justice  
Community Works  
Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance  
CURE (Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants)  
Directions for Youth & Families  
First Focus Campaign for Children  
Forum for Youth Investment  
Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop  
From Prison Cells To PhD  
Futures Without Violence  
Girls Inc.  
Girls Inc. Carpinteria  
Girls Inc. of Bay County  
Girls Inc. of Greater Philadelphia & Southern New Jersey  
Girls Inc. of Holyoke  
Girls Inc. of Huntsville  
Girls Inc. of Jacksonville  
Girls Inc. of Long Island  
Girls Inc. of Memphis  
Girls Inc. of Metropolitan Dallas  
Girls Inc. of Monroe County  
Girls Inc. of Omaha  
Girls Inc. of San Antonio  
Girls Inc. of Santa Fe  
Girls Inc. of Shelbyville & Shelby County  
Girls Inc. of Tennessee Valley  
Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest  
Girls Inc. of West Contra Costa County  
Girls Incorporated of Kingsport  
Girls Incorporated of Pinellas  
Gladys Allen Brigham Com. Ctr. & Girls Inc. of the Berkshires  
Healthy Teen Network  
Human Rights for Kids  
Institute of Forgiveness  
Justice For Families  
Justice Innovations  
Justice Policy Institute  
Justice Resource Institute  
Juvenile Justice Coalition (Ohio)  
Kansas Appleseed  
Learning Disabilities Association of America  
Legal Aid Justice Center  
Lena Pope  
Louisiana Center for Children's Rights  
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership

Missouri State Public Defender  
MST Services  
NAACP  
National Network for Youth  
National Action Network  
National Association of School Psychologists  
National Association of Social Workers  
National Coalition for the Homeless  
National Council of Churches  
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges  
National Criminal Justice Association  
National Crittenton  
National Juvenile Justice Network  
National Network for Youth  
National PTA  
New Jersey Parents Caucus  
Nolef Turns Inc.  
North County Lifeline  
Office of the Ohio Public Defender  
Open City Advocates  
Parent Watch  
Results for America  
Rights4Girls  
RK Consultants, Inc.  
SAY San Diego (Social Advocates for Youth)  
School Social Work Association of America  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
SparkAction  
Texas Appleseed  
Texas Criminal Justice Coalition  
The Sentencing Project  
Treatment Communities of America  
True Colors United  
Ubuntu Village NOLA  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Voices for Children in Nebraska  
W. Haywood Burns Institute  
YMCA of the USA  
Youth Advocates Programs, Inc.  
Youth Sentencing & Reentry Project (YSRP)  
YWCA  
YWCA of Syracuse and Onondaga County Inc.

CC: Members of the Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittee of the House  
Appropriations Committee