



September 23, 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

Dear Chairman Moran, Ranking Member Shaheen, and Members of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee:

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.¹ 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 Act², 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 funding would have on states' ability to serve youth.³ We are pleased to see that, for the first time in several years, the House included funding for these critical programs in its FY 2020 Commerce, Justice, and Science (CJS) bill (H.R. 3055). However, the funding levels in H.R. 3055 fall \$45.5 million below authorizing levels. We encourage you to consider raising the funding levels in line with the reauthorization bill, including the following amounts:

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

² 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>.

³ 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>.

Require full implementation of the JJDP Act 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 JJDP Act 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.

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

- **\$30,000,000** for the Tiffany Joslyn 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.⁴

⁴Tiffany Joslyn Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Reauthorization and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Act of 2019, H.R. 494, 116th Cong. (2019); *See also* Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2017, S. 860, 115th Cong. (2017) (This program was also reauthorized by the Senate in the chamber’s original bill to reauthorize the JJDP Act. Title V of the Act provided a straight reauthorization of the juvenile accountability block grant program).

Historically, funding through the juvenile accountability block grant (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.

Finally, we respectfully request that you consider including the following report language in the final bill:

- The Committee is of the opinion that effective implementation of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 requires timely and comprehensive guidance to states by the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). The Committee encourages DOJ and OJJDP to support full, timely implementation of the law as intended. Further, the Committee urges DOJ and OJJDP to encourage all fifty states and six U.S. territories to fully participate in the Act and its goals of improving outcomes for public safety and youth. Appropriations to DOJ and OJJDP are provided to ensure states have the training and support to continue as fully participating members in the Act.

The JJRPA has been so successful that 47 states and 5 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 Juvenile Justice Reform, Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public 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
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 Disability Rights Network
National Juvenile Defender Center
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