



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 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.

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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 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.<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  
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.

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

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