

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 23, 2012

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski and Ranking Member Hutchison:

Thank you for your continued leadership in providing substantial federal support for the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) Program over the years. As you well know, Byrne JAG is a cornerstone crime-fighting program that supports the federal government's crucial role in spurring innovation across the criminal justice system, as well as testing and replicating evidence-based practices nationwide.

Given the significant financial constraints the federal government has faced in recent years, funding for Byrne JAG has been reduced by nearly one-third over the past two fiscal years. These cuts will have a direct and serious impact in our states as successful public safety initiatives and cross-jurisdictional collaborations are forced to close or be scaled back. Therefore, we ask that the Byrne JAG program be protected against further cuts in the Fiscal Year 2013 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

One of the keys to the Byrne JAG program's continuing success is its flexibility: federal dollars can be used in a wide variety of capacities at the local level in the way most appropriate to address local community needs across the criminal justice spectrum, and allows localities to balance resources and react to urgent challenges or changing circumstances.

Byrne JAG funds are used for law enforcement, prosecution and courts, prevention, drug treatment and enforcement, gang prevention, planning, evaluation, training, technology, and crime and victim witness programs. Guided by statewide strategic planning, Byrne JAG funds are able to test and measure innovative methods for reducing crime, preventing juvenile delinquency, and reducing recidivism, while at the same time saving taxpayer dollars.

Sixty percent of Byrne JAG funds are provided to the states to pass through for innovative programming in local communities. The remaining forty percent is provided to local communities directly. In Fiscal Year 2011, over 1,300 local jurisdictions across the country were awarded direct grants, and many more were awarded funds passed through by the state criminal justice planning agencies.

As you move forward in deliberations over Fiscal Year 2013 appropriations, we ask that you continue Congress' commitment to the Byrne JAG Program.

Sincerely,



MARIA E. CANTWELL
United States Senator



CHARLES E. GRASSLEY
United States Senator



TOM HARKIN
United States Senator



PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator



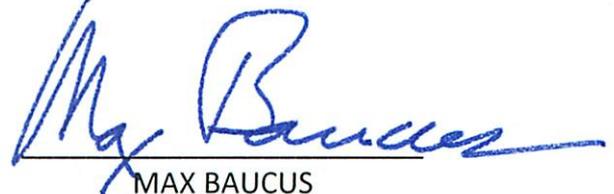
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United States Senator



JOHN F. KERRY
United States Senator



BENJAMIN CARDIN
United States Senator



MAX BAUCUS
United States Senator



CARL LEVIN
United States Senator



DANIEL K. AKAKA
United States Senator



TOM UDALL
United States Senator



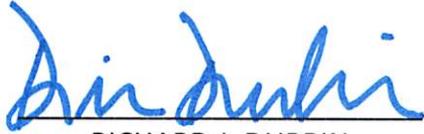
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TIM JOHNSON
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SHELDON WHITEHOUSE
United States Senator



SCOTT BROWN
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Mark Begich

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United States Senator

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JEFF MERKLEY
United States Senator

Kent Conrad

KENT CONRAD
United States Senator

Joe Manchin

JOE MANCHIN
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Herb Kohl

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Jack Reed

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ROGER F. WICKER
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Debbie Stabenow

DEBBIE STABENOW
United States Senator