



March 10, 2020

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 2021. **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 Act,² 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 a little over forty percent 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 While we were grateful to see an increase in funding for juvenile justice programs in FY 2020, the levels were still below authorizing levels. We strongly encourage you to

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 JJ, 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 (2020), available at <http://www.act4jj.org/sites/default/files/ckfinder/files/Historic%20Funding%20Chart%20-%20FY20.pdf>.

consider raising the funding levels in line with the reauthorization bill, including the following amounts:

Require full implementation of the JJDP Act by appropriating \$176 million dollars for Titles II & V of the Act in FY2021 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

Historically, funding through the JABG program has supported state efforts to effectively strengthen supports for court-involved youth. These funds support vital state efforts to

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

effectively strengthen juvenile court services, such as behavioral health screening and assessment for court-involved youth and alternatives to detention.

The JJDPA has been an extremely successful 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,

National Groups:

ACLU
African American Juvenile Justice Project
Afterschool Alliance
Boys Town
Campaign for Youth Justice
Center for Children's Law and Policy
Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Ceres Policy Research
Child Welfare League of America
Children's Advocacy Institute
Children's Defense Fund
Coalition for Juvenile Justice
Communities In Schools National Office
CURE (Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants)
First Focus on Children
Forum for Youth Investment
Futures Without Violence
Girls Inc.
Healthy Teen Network
Human Rights for Kids
Justice For Families
Justice Policy Institute
Juvenile Law Center
Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime & Incarceration
Learning Disabilities Association of America
Legal Aid Justice Center
Legal Rights Center
MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership
MomsRising

NAACP

National Association of Counsel for Children

National Association of Social Workers

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

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 Partnership for Juvenile Services (NPJS)

R Street Institute

Results For America

Rights4Girls

Rutgers University Center on Youth Justice and Human Development

School Social Work Association of America

Southern Poverty Law Center Action Fund

SparkAction

Strategies for Youth

The Forum for Youth Investment

The Sentencing Project

Treatment Communities of America

True Colors United

Union for Reform Judaism

W. Haywood Burns Institute

Year Up

YMCA of the USA

Youth Advocate Programs (YAP)

Youth First Initiative

Youth Villages

STATES:

Alabama

Girls Inc. of Dothan

Alaska

Alaska Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee

Arizona

Children's Action Alliance

Arkansas

Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families

California

Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC)

Girls Inc. of Alameda County

Girls Inc. of Greater Santa Barbara

Girls Inc. of the Island City

Girls Inc. of San Diego County

Colorado

Colorado Juvenile Defender Center

Connecticut

Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance

Delaware

Delaware Center for Justice

Girls Inc. of Delaware

Delaware Office of Defense Services

District of Columbia

Free Minds Book Club & Writing Workshop

Georgetown Juvenile Justice Initiative

Open City Advocates

School Justice Project

Florida

Girls Inc. of Jacksonville

Girls Inc. of Pinellas

No left Turns Inc.

Southern Poverty Law Center of Florida

Georgia

Voices for Georgia's Children

Illinois

Girls Inc. of Chicago

Illinois Juvenile Justice Initiative

Indiana

Children's Law & Policy of Indiana

CROWN Community Development Corporation (Crown Mentoring Program)

Girls Inc. of Wayne County

Indianapolis Urban League

Marion County Commission on Youth

Iowa

Girls Inc. of Sioux City

Kansas

Kansas Appleseed Center for Law and Justice

Kentucky

Kentucky Juvenile Justice Initiative

Kentucky Youth Advocates

Louisiana

Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FFLIC)

Louisiana Center for Children's Rights

Maine

Spurwink
Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Maine Inside out
Community Concepts, Inc.

Maryland

Advocates for Children and Youth
BMore Awesome
The Choice Program, UMBC
Shades of Art

Massachusetts

Citizens for Juvenile Justice
Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell

Michigan

Michigan Center for Youth Justice

Minnesota

Girls Inc. YWCA Minneapolis

Mississippi

Mississippi juvenile justice state advisory group

Missouri

All of Us or None of Us-St. Louis Chapter
Empower Missouri
Jewish Community Relations Council of St. Louis, MO
Metropolitan Congregations United
Missouri CURE
Missouri State Public Defender
Mothers of Incarcerated Sons & Daughters (MISD) of Kansas City, MO

Nebraska

Girls Inc. of Omaha
Sarpy County Public Defender Office
Voices for Children in Nebraska

Nevada

ACLU-Nevada

New Hampshire

Girls Inc. of New Hampshire

New Jersey

New Jersey Parents Caucus

New Mexico

NMCAN

New York

Cases

Children's Defense Fund-NY

Girls Inc. at YWCA of Syracuse and Onondaga County Inc.

Girls Inc. NYC

Girls Inc. of Long Island

Gladys Allen Brigham Com Ctr/Girls Inc. of the Berkshires

Youth Represent

Ohio

Directions for Youth & Families

Franklin County Public Defender Office

Juvenile Justice Coalition

Oklahoma

Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy

Oregon

Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest

Pennsylvania

Girls Inc. of Greater Philadelphia & Southern New Jersey

Youth Sentencing & Reentry Project (YSRP)

Rhode Island

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

South Carolina

Every Black Girl

Lawyer's Committee for Children's Rights

My Brothers Keeper

Tennessee

Girls Inc. of Kingsport

Girls Inc. of Memphis

Girls Inc. Of Shelbyville & Shelby County

Girls Inc. of TN Valley

Texas

Girls Inc. of Greater Houston

Girls Inc. of Metropolitan Dallas

Girls Inc. of San Antonio

Texas Criminal Justice Coalition

Utah

Utah Juvenile Defender Attorneys

Vermont

Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform

Virginia

Institute of Forgiveness

Washington

Girls Inc. of Washington County
Washington Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
Washington Defense Association

West Virginia

ACLU of West Virginia

Wyoming

Wyoming Children's Law Center, Inc

CC: House and Senate Appropriations Committee Members