



A CAMPAIGN OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE & DELINQUENCY PREVENTION
COALITION

— the collective voice of more than 350 organizations nationwide —

March 14, 2016

Dear Member of the Commerce, Justice & Science Appropriations Subcommittee:

On behalf of the Act4JJ Campaign, we are writing to urge you to include adequate funding for critical juvenile justice and delinquency prevention programs in the final Fiscal Year 2017 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) Appropriations bill.

As the leaders on the CJS Appropriations bill, we encourage you to **work to secure the highest 302 (b) allocation possible** and, within that amount, consider funding to support juvenile justice programs that:

- Protect youth in custody from exposure to adult jails and adult offenders;
- Ensure youth who commit status offenses like running away from home or skipping school remain in their community, not in detention;
- Address the racial and ethnic disparities that exist in the juvenile justice system;
- Support programming for girls and Tribal youth;
- Build effective prevention programs in the community to divert children from the justice system;
- Provide trauma-informed care and adopt evidence-based practices;
- Provide indigent defense to youth; and
- Provide training for juvenile court judges

Federal investments play an essential role in state juvenile justice efforts to protect youth and promote safe communities. Overall federal support of key juvenile justice programs has declined by more than 50 percent since fiscal year 2002, and we are concerned about the impact that any further reductions in funding would have on states' ability to serve youth.

Cuts over the past decade have weakened the federal state partnership and stymied national, state, and local progress in this area. A survey by the Coalition for Juvenile Justice found that 89% of member states reported that due to federal cuts, **fewer youth will have access to services** designed to keep them from engaging in unlawful behaviors and penetrating deeper

into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Since this survey was administered, funding has continued to drop, adding additional strain on the states.

We encourage you to work to restore some of the critical funding that has been lost over the last decade and include the levels of investment recommended by the Administration in its FY 2017 budget proposal. These levels reflect authorizers' recommendations included in pending legislation to reauthorize the JJDPA and would begin to restore funding cut over the past several years. At a minimum, appropriators should reject any further reductions from FY16 levels. Any less would move even further away from the targeted federal involvement that has historically provided critical national leadership to states in preventing youth from entering the justice system.

The Act4JJ Campaign urges you to consider these critical supports for youth and communities in this year's CJS Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,
Campaign for Youth Justice
Coalition for Juvenile Justice
National Juvenile Justice Network

[ADD YOUR ORGANIZATION HERE BY MONDAY, March 14)!