



January 23, 2020
The Honorable William Barr
Attorney General of the United States
950 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Barr,

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. In particular, we urge you to support full implementation of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 (JJRA) (Public Law 93–415) in your FY2021 budget proposal. As you know, the law reauthorized the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP), which remains the only federal statute that sets out national standards for the custody and care of youth in the juvenile justice system and provides direction and support for state juvenile justice system improvements.

Under the newly reauthorized law, states are being asked to do more to receive their federal formula grants under Title II of the Act, 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. Many of the major changes to the law took effect beginning this current fiscal year.

While the final FY2020 appropriations bill does represent yet another year of slight increases for funding of juvenile justice programs, the funding levels still fall short of authorizing levels. The law authorizes a total of \$176 million every year for fiscal years 2019-2023 for the Department of Justice to operate programs under the Act. Under the FY 2020 Consolidated Appropriations Act, \$63 million was allocated for Title II of the Act and \$42 million was allocated for Title V of the Act.

Federal funding will play a major role in the success of these reforms. In order for these bipartisan improvements made to the JJDP to be successful, the full support of the Administration is critical. We urge you to support full implementation of the Juvenile Justice Reform Act of 2018 by supporting full funding authorized by Congress for these programs at the following levels:

- **\$80,000,000** to carry out programs under Title II state formula grants of the JJDP;
- **\$96,053,401** to carry out programs under Title V of the JJDP;

- Of which, 11% goes to support the Tribal Youth Program; and
- The remaining \$86.4 million goes to support the Title V PROMISE grants.

We recognize the competing interests you face as you prepare the Department's FY2021 budget request, but despite the modest increase in funding for juvenile justice programs, funding for the JJDPa has decreased by more than 50 percent since the law was last reauthorized in 2002.¹

There are hundreds of initiatives around the country that are supported by funding through the JJDPa and could benefit from the increased funding. Further, full funding will affirm the important federal-state partnership created by the JJDPa to protect children and to invest in innovative and cost-effective reforms that keep youth out of trouble and communities safe.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the Administration's Fiscal Year 2021 budget request to Congress support full funding for these programs. We look forward to working with you to ensure the success of this important law.

Sincerely,

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Afterschool Alliance

Campaign for Youth Justice

Center for Children's Law and Policy

Children's Advocacy Institute

Coalition for Juvenile Justice

Girls Inc.

Healthy Teen Network

Justice For Families

Learning Disabilities Association of America

National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

National Criminal Justice Association

National Crittenton

National Juvenile Defender Center

National Juvenile Justice Network

R Street Institute

Results For America

Rights4Girls

School Social Work Association of America

SparkAction

Strategies for Youth, Inc.

The Forum for Youth Investment

Union for Reform Judaism

Youth Villages

¹ ACT 4 JJ COALITION, JUVENILE JUSTICE FEDERAL FUNDING CHART (2019), *available at* <http://www.act4jj.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/Historic%20Funding%20Chart%20-%20FY19.pdf>.