



CRIME & JUSTICE RESEARCH ALLIANCE

December 6, 2017

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Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn HOB
Washington DC 20515

The Hon. Jerrold Nadler
Acting Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
2141 Rayburn HOB
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Goodlatte and Rep. Nadler:

On behalf of the Crime & Justice Research Alliance (CJRA) – a joint project of the American Society of Criminology (ASC) and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) representing the public policy priorities of more than 5,000 criminologists – we write to share our concerns about a provision adopted during the Committee's mark up of H.R. 4477, the Fix NICS Act, that would reauthorize the Department of Justice's key research and evaluation agencies, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and National Institute of Justice (NIJ), at significantly lower levels than requested in the President's budget or appropriated by the Congress in recent years.

Although CJRA supports the reauthorization of justice research agencies and appreciates the Committee's interest in doing so, we are deeply concerned that the proposed authorization levels in this bill would represent a 32 percent cut to both agencies and, if appropriated at such levels, would undermine critical research serving DOJ as well as state and local law enforcement officers and policymakers. Over the last several years, we have seen an unprecedented demand from federal, state and local policymakers and law enforcement officials for objective research to inform necessary reforms to policies involving counter-terrorism, law enforcement, corrections, mental health, and addiction. It is imperative that we, at a minimum, continue current appropriated funding levels to support this essential research, as well as meeting the increasing demand.

As Chairman Goodlatte said in remarks during the mark up, "research is so critical to the development of sound criminal justice policy." We couldn't agree more, and we know that it is not your intent to reauthorize these research agencies in a manner that would constrain resources necessary to support their important work.

We appreciate your staff's responsiveness to our concerns and willingness to work with us as the bill advances in order to address these concerns and consider changes to ensure these agencies remain adequately funded at their current appropriated levels. We look forward to continuing these conversations and to working with your staff in this effort to ensure that the final product is a bill that accomplishes the goals of the Fix NICS Act without compromising the efficacy of our criminal justice research programs.

Sincerely,

Peter Wood, Ph.D.
Chair
Crime & Justice Research Alliance

Cc: Rep. John Culberson (*Sponsor of H.R.4477*)

www.crimeandjusticeresearchalliance.org