

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 1, 2018

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
US Attorney General
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable Christopher Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Attorney General Sessions and Director Wray:

We have been following with concern the removal of the majority of longstanding data tables published in the (Federal Bureau of Investigation's) FBI's annual *Crime in the United States* report for 2017, in which the number of tables was abruptly reduced from 81 to 29. These data tables provide policymakers, criminologists, and the public with critical information about crime trends in our country and represent an important source of objective data by which we can better monitor and understand criminal justice issues. We request that this information be made available to the public.

The Crime & Justice Research Alliance (CJRA), which represents the public policy priorities for more than 5,000 criminologists, noted in a November 2017 letter that the abrupt removal of these tables, "has significant implications for the justice research community that relies on this trusted information for a broad range of research activities, including evaluation and assessment of trends in crime, arrests, clearance rates, and related matters" and "does not reflect the FBI's stated commitment to meeting the needs of the users of these data."¹

We were encouraged by statements made by Director Wray during a House Judiciary Committee hearing on December 7, 2017, where he said, "[W]e recently made a decision internally to go ahead and republish the information with the tables. It's going to take a few weeks for that to happen, however." Unfortunately, in the two months since this statement, the missing data tables remain unpublished. Furthermore, guidance provided to the research community directing people to the Crime Stats' email account for specific data tables notes that the FBI is unable to provide any of the missing tables at this time. This has now resulted in an unnecessary and unacceptable delay in making these data tables available—data that has been regularly provided in a timely manner within the annual report in prior years.

As you prepare the UCR report for 2016, we would like to know the status of the release of the missing 2016 data tables and ascertain a date that they will be made publicly available. In addition, we would like your assurance that the missing data tables will be published in the 2017 annual report to ensure there is no additional gap in the availability of this data. Although we understand that the FBI is moving to a new online data service that will make these tables

¹ <https://espnfivethirtyeight.files.wordpress.com/2017/11/cjra-doj-fbi-11-28-17.pdf>

accessible, we are concerned that any delays in the launch of this new online service could result in another gap in making these 81 data tables available.

We look forward to your response and hope that we can work together to ensure that the Department of Justice and the FBI continue to provide this trusted source of information.

Sincerely,



BRIAN SCHATZ
United States Senator



CHRIS VAN HOLLEN
United States Senator



MAZIE K. HIRONO
United States Senator



CORY A. BOOKER
United States Senator



KAMALA D. HARRIS
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