



# CRIME & JUSTICE RESEARCH ALLIANCE

## Board Members

Nancy La Vigne, PhD (Chair)  
Director, Justice Policy Center  
The Urban Institute

Edward Maguire, PhD (Vice Chair)  
Professor of Justice, Law, and  
Criminology  
American University

Laura Dugan, PhD  
Professor of Criminology and  
Criminal Justice  
University of Maryland

Daniel Mears, PhD  
Professor of Criminology  
Florida State University

Joycelyn Pollock, PhD, JD  
Professor of Criminal Justice  
Texas State University

Richard Rosenfeld, PhD  
Professor of Criminology and  
Criminal Justice  
University of Missouri - St. Louis

Christy Visher, PhD  
Professor of Sociology and  
Criminal Justice  
University of Delaware

Peter Wood, PhD  
Professor of Sociology and  
Criminology  
Eastern Michigan University

John Worrall, PhD  
Professor of Criminology  
University of Texas at Dallas

March 17, 2016

The Hon. Richard Shelby  
Chairman  
Commerce-Justice-Science Sub.  
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Hon. John Culberson  
Chairman  
Commerce-Justice-Science Sub.  
House Appropriations Committee

The Hon. Barbara Mikulski  
Ranking Member  
Commerce-Justice-Science Sub.  
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Hon. Mike Honda  
Ranking Member  
Commerce-Justice-Science Sub.  
House Appropriations Committee

Dear Chairman Shelby, Senator Mikulski, Chairman Culberson and Rep. Honda:

On behalf the nation's criminology research community, we write to urge your support for an increase in funding for the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and National Institute of Justice (NIJ) in your FY 2017 Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations bills. As you know, these agencies have not received a meaningful increase in funding for many years, yet the Congress, Justice Department and policymakers at all levels of government are seeking independent research on criminal justice matters now more than ever.

Over the last two 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 policing, prison and sentencing reform, mental health, addiction and community trust-building activities. As you know, there are numerous reform bills currently pending in Congress, which were informed by such research, and more are expected. All of the policy reforms under consideration are relying heavily on the research and program evaluations that are funded through NIJ and BJS. While we are pleased with the growing interest and application of criminal justice research, we are deeply concerned about the limited resources available to these agencies to accommodate this increasing demand.

We wholeheartedly support the substantial increases proposed in the President's FY 2017 budget (including a \$17 million increase for BJS and a \$10 million increase for NIJ). However, if the subcommittee is unable to provide the President's requested funding levels due to a constrained allocation, we encourage the subcommittee to provide an increase in funding for these important research agencies beyond the FY 2016 Omnibus levels within the resources available. An increase in funding, based on the available discretionary resources, will be a first

step towards providing the necessary funding to ensure that our nation's policymakers will have the best possible research to inform criminal justice policy at all levels of government.

Thank you for your continued leadership on the Commerce-Justice-Science Subcommittees to ensure that criminal justice policies and programs are informed by objective research that will yield the desired policy outcomes. We look forward to working with you and your staff as you continue your development of the FY 2017 Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy G. La Vigne", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nancy G. La Vigne, Ph.D.  
Chair, Crime and Justice Research Alliance