

April 11, 2014

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski  
Chairwoman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, and Science  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, and Science  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Mikulski and Ranking Member Shelby:

Twenty-five years ago, the first Drug Court was launched in Miami, Florida, sparking a movement that has saved over 1.25 million lives and billions of tax dollars. Today, over 2,800 Drug Courts are in operation in all 50 states and U.S. territories—successfully reducing crime, saving money, and serving our veterans in need. We encourage you to continue to prioritize funding for this vitally important program in this year's congressional appropriations process.

Our 25 years of experience with Drug Courts conclusively establishes that treatment works when accompanied by accountability. Drug Courts are changing the course of the criminal justice system.

The nation's over 2,800 Drug Courts—which require nonviolent, drug addicted offenders to remain in treatment and undergo random drug testing while under intensive judicial supervision—have been cited as the nation's most fiscally responsible method for dealing with substance abusing offenders. In December, 2011, the U.S. Government Accountability Office released a report confirming that Drug Courts reduce crime by up to 58 percent.

Research also shows that about 60% of Drug Court clients complete at least 12 months of treatment, compared to just 10% of probationers and parolees who do so. The most comprehensive study on Drug Courts to date, prepared by the National Institute of Justice's National Multi-Site Adult Drug Court Evaluation at the U.S. Department of Justice, concluded that Drug Courts yield an average cost savings of \$6,000 per participant.

Veterans Treatment Courts have emerged as a strategy for responding to former soldiers who suffer from substance abuse, mental illness and/or trauma. These innovative courts connect veterans who come into contact with the criminal justice system as a result of these issues with the benefits and treatment they have earned.

We hope that you will continue to support the work of Drug Courts and Veterans Treatment Courts in the fiscal year 2015 appropriations process. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,