

**U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies  
“FY 2014 Members and Outside Witness Hearing”**

**Statement of former U.S. Representative Jim Ramstad  
March 21, 2013**

Chairman Wolf, Ranking Member Fattah, distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. Due to a family commitment I am unable to attend today's hearing. I respectfully request my statement be entered into the record.

In FY '13 Congress had the wisdom and vision to provide dedicated Drug Court funding for the Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program so that our nation can continue to reap the substantial societal and economic benefits of this proven program. I wish to thank this committee for supporting \$45 million for Drug Courts and \$4 million for Veterans Treatment Courts in FY '13. I am requesting that the Congress maintain \$45 million for the Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program and \$4 million for Veterans Treatment Courts at the Department of Justice for FY '14.

As Congress continues the important work of restoring the fiscal strength of this nation, it is vital that investments be made in programs proven to provide a healthy return on investment. There is no greater example than Drug Courts, which save vast resources and tax dollars by reducing drug abuse, crime and recidivism at a level unmatched by any other program in our nation's history.

From serving our veterans addicted to prescription drugs and countless methamphetamine addicts; to helping juveniles addicted to designer drugs and parents facing the loss of their children due to addiction; from rural towns to our largest cities; from an alternative to incarceration to re-entry into the community, Drug Courts are having a profound impact throughout the United States. To be smart on crime, we must expand the existing Drug Court system to every addicted offender eligible for a community sentence. This approach is being praised by conservatives and liberals alike and truly warrants strong Congressional support.

In 2011, the Government Accountability Office released its fourth report on Drug Courts, concluding once again that Drug Courts reduce recidivism and cut crime. The report validated existing research that Drug Courts have up to a 26 percent lower rate of recidivism than comparison groups.

Now more than ever we must focus on proven programs that guarantee financial returns and measurable success. There is simply no better investment this Congress can make than Drug Courts. Drug Courts have been proven through rigorous scientific research to decrease crime, save taxpayer dollars, rehabilitate offenders, and restore families and communities. No other criminal justice or behavioral healthcare program has a comparable record of success nor such strong bipartisan support in Congress. One would be hard pressed to identify another federal program that has been as avidly endorsed and sustained by States and counties. Supported by policy analysts on both ends of the political spectrum, Drug Courts offer a roadmap for a practical, evidence-based and fiscally conservative drug policy that works.

I strongly urge an investment of \$45 million for the Drug Court Discretionary Grant Program and \$4 million for Veterans Treatment Courts at DOJ.