

DATE, 2022

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen, Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Jerry Moran, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science,
and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate

Dear Chairwoman Shaheen and Ranking Member Moran,

As you consider Fiscal Year 2023 appropriations, we ask for continued funding for drug courts and veterans treatment courts at the U.S. Department of Justice.

Drug courts and veterans treatment courts unite public health and public safety to transform the justice system's response to addiction and mental illness by offering an evidence-based alternative to incarceration that combines treatment and accountability. Drug courts and veterans treatment courts have saved billions of tax dollars and have led more than 1.5 million people to a path of long-term recovery through programs in all 50 states and four territories.

Continued support for these programs is vitally important this year as the nation continues to battle the substance-use-disorder crisis, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic and its lingering impacts on physical and mental health. Investment in these evidence-based programs is needed to help state and local leaders rebuild and increase their capacity to address this crisis in the coming years.

Adult drug courts are considered the most effective and fiscally responsible response to our nation's overcrowded prisons and addiction epidemics. The U.S. Government Accountability Office reported in 2011 that drug courts reduce crime by up to 58 percent. Research also shows that about 60 percent of drug court participants complete at least 12 months of treatment, compared to only 10 percent of probationers and parolees. The most comprehensive study on drug courts to date, the U.S. Department of Justice's National Multi-Site Adult Drug Court Evaluation, concluded that drug courts provide an average cost savings of \$6,000 per participant.

Veterans treatment courts use the highly successful drug court model to aid former members of the Armed Services who suffer from substance use disorders, mental health disorders, and trauma. Veterans treatment courts help save the lives, families, and futures of veterans by providing a highly structured program to connect them with local, state, and federal resources.

We hope you will support the work of drug courts and veterans treatment courts in the Fiscal Year 2023 appropriation process. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

