



## **BYRNE JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT (JAG) PROGRAM**

As narcotic officers we cannot – and will never – accept the high costs of drug abuse, addiction, and drug-related crime as the norm. We have knocked on too many doors to break the devastating news to families and friends that a loved one died of an overdose or was killed in a drugged driving accident or drug-related violence. We have rescued too many children from toxic meth labs and abuse-ridden crack houses, and we have saved countless lives by administering overdose reversal medications. We have seen too many promising young lives destroyed by the disease of addiction, and we have watched too many of our brothers and sisters die in the line of duty at the hands of drug-fueled, violent criminals. NNOAC members know that every one of these costs is preventable. **We have dedicated our lives to reducing these costs, and Byrne JAG is one of the most important tools that we have.**

### **\$519 MILLION FOR THE BYRNE JAG FORMULA PROGRAM IN FY 2021 WILL MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL TASK FORCES THAT ENABLE LAW ENFORCEMENT TO FOCUS ON DRUG TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS**

The Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) formula program is the most important program supporting multi-jurisdictional law enforcement in America, and it is the top federal affairs priority of the National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC).

The most recent funding authorization level for the Byrne JAG program was \$1.1 billion, yet Congress only funded the program at \$412.25 million in FY 2022 (after carve-outs). **The NNOAC strongly urges Congress to restore FY 2024 Byrne JAG formula funding to the FY 2010 level of \$519 million.**

The importance of multi-jurisdictional law enforcement task forces that are supported in part by this program has clearly been recognized by members of the House and Senate. Byrne JAG has enjoyed bipartisan and bicameral support throughout its history thanks to the outstanding results it has enabled law enforcement to generate.

When appropriations carve-outs are taken into account, **Byrne JAG funding available to states has been slashed significantly since 2010. As long as international drug trafficking organizations continue to violate U.S. borders, and as long as drug dealers do business across state lines, the Federal government has a duty and responsibility to support multi-jurisdictional law enforcement efforts to address this criminal behavior that is killing Americans.**

The program has been especially effective in fostering the development of multi-jurisdictional drug task forces, which have spawned best practices in information sharing, case deconfliction, and institutional coordination against local and regional drug threats. The result has been a massive leveraging of state and local funding focused on reducing the threat posed by drug traffickers: one study estimated that **for every federal dollar invested in the Byrne JAG program, at least \$10 of state, county, and municipal funds are committed to joint enforcement efforts.**

America's narcotic officers watch every day as illegal drug manufacturers, traffickers, and dealers perpetrate "chemical attacks" on our streets by creating and feeding a growing number of addictions to dangerous narcotics. **Congress must not ignore the vital role of drug law enforcement as part of a comprehensive strategy to reduce the carnage is occurring today in every American community.** More than 100,000 American lives were lost in 2021 as a direct result of drug poisonings - associated with both illegal and legal drugs - according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This number does not include those lives lost as a result of drug-related vehicle accidents or drug-related turf violence. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) estimates that the annual cost illegal drugs, tobacco, and alcohol impose on our society - our health systems, law enforcement, welfare system, and the business community - is over \$740 billion.

**As narcotic officers, we cannot - and will never - accept this as the norm.** Byrne JAG-funded task forces have been extremely effective in helping us apprehend poison sellers, target trafficking organizations, and remove drug supply off American streets. **But because funding as declined, the number of task forces has been reduced as the number of overdose deaths has skyrocketed.** The key is local control of the task forces and information sharing among and across local, state, and federal jurisdictions. Byrne JAG has resulted in thousands of prosecutions of high-level drug distributors, thousands of meth lab busts, millions of doses of narcotics seized, and many lives saved. But the problem continues. The latest CDC and FBI stats show that both drug use and crime rates are rising as our policies and funding have weakened. We must not relent on the drug traffickers who slowly destroy our communities from within.

**Congress should restore funding for the Byrne JAG formula program in the FY 2024 appropriations cycle at the FY 2010 level of \$519 million.** State and local narcotic officers put their lives on the line every day to protect American families and communities. Byrne JAG support is essential to ensure that we continue to make progress against illegal drugs, their purveyors, and their effects on American communities.