



September 4, 2025

The Honorable John Thune  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Honorable Members of Congress:

I am writing on behalf of Catholic Charities USA to request funding for the Department of Justice (DOJ) grant programs that serve youth, families, and communities affected by crime and the justice system. We remain grateful for your continued support and collaboration in service to these communities. As you prepare the budget for FY 2026, I request that you, at a minimum, maintain funding at the previous year's appropriations levels. Ideally, any increase in funding above FY 2025 levels should account for inflation and the increased cost of providing these critically needed services.

**I. Crime Victim Assistance and Services for Survivors of Human Trafficking**

Over 60 out of 168 independent Catholic Charities member agencies collaborate with government at all levels to serve those victimized by crime, including victims of domestic violence, survivors of human trafficking, and young people living in situations that increase their risk of being trafficked or exploited. These agencies provide trauma-informed care, counseling, housing support, and case management assistance tailored to the needs of these vulnerable individuals and families.

We are deeply grateful for our ongoing collaboration with various government agencies, including the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security, which supports survivors in their recovery process and increases public awareness of the prevalence and dangers of human trafficking. Catholic Charities agencies receive hundreds of referrals from federal and state government offices throughout the year to provide comprehensive services to the individuals they encounter. Additional referrals are received from the National Human Trafficking Hotline and other community service organizations.

Adequate funding is critical to sustain this public-private collaboration. Therefore, I ask you to maintain the previous year's funding levels for the following programs:

- Crime Victim Assistance Fund

- Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program
- Violence Against Women Formula Grants
- COVID-19 Crime Victim Assistance
- Sexual Assault Services Formula Program

## **II. Second Chance Act Reentry Initiatives**

Additionally, Catholic Charities member agencies work with correctional institutions to prepare individuals for reentry into society after a period of incarceration. These individuals face significant barriers while reintegrating, including homelessness, unemployment, mental and physical health challenges, and social isolation due to the stigma associated with incarceration. Catholic Charities agencies that welcome returning individuals collaborate with correctional facilities to develop comprehensive programs that facilitate successful reintegration, aiming to reduce recidivism and promote public safety. Services include job placement, financial literacy, substance abuse support, anger management support, mental health counseling, reestablishing family ties, and much more. The Council for State Governments reports that there has been a 23% reduction in state-level reincarceration rates since the law's enactment over 15 years ago.<sup>1</sup> This data demonstrates that Second Chance initiatives enhance public safety and reduce recidivism. Ongoing funding for this work benefits us all.

## **III. Youth Mentoring and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Grants**

Catholic Charities member agencies collaborate with federal, state, and local government entities to implement evidence-based and effective strategies that prevent delinquency. These efforts include providing trauma-informed mental and behavioral health services, mentorship, and vocational training programs. Adequate funding for youth-focused services would enable charitable organizations like ours to expand their capacity to provide guidance, facilitate the development of positive social skills in young individuals, and foster favorable outcomes for them. Therefore, we request, at a minimum, flat funding for youth mentoring, the Delinquency Prevention Block Grant, the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant Program, and other DOJ-funded programs that protect and support young people.

Catholic Charities remains grateful for your continued dedication to addressing the needs of vulnerable members of society and the many challenges they encounter. We reaffirm our commitment to working with you in service to our sisters and brothers in fulfillment of the gospel mandate in Matthew 25.

Sincerely,



Kerry Alys Robinson  
CEO, Catholic Charities USA

cc: Honorable Members of the United States Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives

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<sup>1</sup> The Council of State Governments Justice Center, *50 States, 1 Goal: Examining State-Level Recidivism Trends in the Second Chance Act Era* (April 2024), <https://csgjusticecenter.org/publications/50-states-1-goal/>.