



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs

December 2, 2002

Dear Friend:

Since coming to the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), I am frequently reminded of the significance of open lines of communication. Because of the current 2003 funding situation, I would like to inform you of the sometimes complicated issues related to the Continuing Resolution (CR) process. As you may be aware, the Senate earlier this fall passed its version of the 2003 Commerce, Justice, State (CJS) spending bill. However the House has not yet acted. As a result, since October 1, 2002, OJP has been operating under a series of Continuing Resolutions and does not yet have a full Fiscal Year 2003 appropriation. The current CR continues through January 11, 2003.

At this point, we can only speculate on the availability of resources for the balance of the fiscal year. Congress could enact additional short-term CRs through February or March, or could elect to enact a long-term CR to provide funding through September 30, 2003. What makes OJP's situation particularly difficult is the fact that the 2003 President's Budget included a number of new program and policy initiatives for which, under the rules governing the CR process, OJP is prohibited from initiating. For example, the 2003 President's Budget proposes the streamlining of the Byrne Formula and LLEBG programs into a single, more unified Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program. Although we are anxious to implement the JAG, under the limitations of a CR it is not possible. And since we cannot assume that the final 2003 CJS appropriation will include funding for the Byrne Formula and LLEBG programs as they currently exist, we find ourselves in a holding pattern.

Further complicating 2003 funding matters is the recent Department of Justice reauthorization, which was passed by Congress in October and signed by the President on November 2, 2002. The reauthorization impacts several OJP programs, most notably those administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, which were almost completely restructured. Because carrying out the new structure is complicated by the CR process, we will delay implementation until full year appropriations are available.

OJP will proceed with issuing discretionary program solicitations, where appropriate, and will accept applications, but will have to delay the award of funds until the Fiscal Year 2003 appropriations are final. For OJP formula programs, we will delay award until full year appropriations are enacted. We regret the inconvenience these restrictions on our ability to award funds may cause some of our grantees during this interim period.

I am hopeful that by the time the current CR expires on January 11, or at least soon thereafter, Congress will be successful in enacting full-year appropriations. I am committed to keeping you informed on the status of OJP's 2003 appropriations and program activities, and look forward to working with you in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Deborah J. Daniels
Assistant Attorney General

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