

**Resolution 8
Urging a Greater Collaborative Process in the Allocation of Byrne JAG Criminal
Justice Funding**

WHEREAS, the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) was authorized by Congress to provide state courts, local governments, states and tribes with critical funding necessary to support a range of program areas including courts, law enforcement, prosecution, crime prevention/education, corrections, drug courts/treatment, planning, evaluation, technology improvement, and victims initiatives; and

WHEREAS, grants awarded through Byrne JAG provide valuable assistance in ensuring the administration of justice in all the states; and

WHEREAS, the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators are supporters of Byrne JAG and were part of a state and local coalition to restore funding to the Byrne JAG program when it was cut by 67 percent in FY 2007; and

WHEREAS, the primary responsibility for the distribution of Byrne JAG funds lies with the governors and their statewide criminal justice commissions; and

WHEREAS, the mission of these statewide criminal justice commissions is to ensure that the various components of the justice system work together to develop plans to reduce crime and substance abuse within the state; and

WHEREAS, we have received reports from state courts that many statewide criminal justice commissions do not involve all stakeholders in the justice system, such as state courts, when developing statewide strategies to address the crime and substance abuse problem; and

WHEREAS, in many cases, these state plans fail to take into account the needs of the state court system because of the lack of state court involvement or representation in the strategic planning process; and

WHEREAS, Judiciary Committee Chairman, Senator Patrick Leahy, has introduced S. 250, the Justice for All Act, which primarily devotes resources to exonerate those wrongfully convicted, but would reinstate a mandatory consultation provision for the distribution of Byrne JAG funding by the state criminal justice commissions; and

WHEREAS, these commissions would be required to involve all stakeholders of the criminal justice system in the planning process before a statewide criminal justice plan is approved and resources from the Byrne JAG program are allocated to the states;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference of Chief Justices and the Conference of State Court Administrators reaffirm their strong support for Byrne JAG, which has helped address judicial public safety challenges throughout its history; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conferences support the provision of S. 250, which calls for reinstatement of the requirement for mandatory consultation with all stakeholders of the state's criminal justice system, before Byrne JAG funding is disbursed.

Adopted as proposed by the CCJ/COSCA Government Affairs Committee at the 2012 Annual Meeting on July 25, 2012.