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COMMITTEE ON  
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VETERANS' AFFAIRS

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4605

April 14, 2010

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Chair, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,  
Science, and Related Agencies  
The Capitol, S-131  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related  
Agencies, The Capitol S-131  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Mikulski and Ranking Member Shelby,

As you begin work on the Commerce, Justice, and Science appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2011, I write to express my support for some of the important programs in the bill. Specifically, I would like to request that the Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act (MIOTCRA) and the Second Chance Act receive adequate funding, and that the spending cap from the Crime Victims Fund established by the Crime Victims Act be raised.

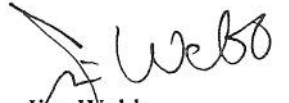
With an estimated sixteen percent of all individuals incarcerated in the United States suffering from mental illness, maintaining MIOTCRA is critically important. As you know, MIOTCRA authorizes grants to state and local governments to improve interventions and treatment for people with mental illness involved in the criminal justice system. Treatment of these individuals can result in cost savings, a dramatic reduction in recidivism rates, and an increase in public safety, and I am strongly supportive of continued funding for this important program.

I also request full funding of the President's FY 2011 budget request for the Second Chance Act. In 2008, 735,000 individuals were released back into our communities from prisons and jails. Research indicates that more than half of these individuals will reoffend and be re-incarcerated by the end of 2011. The Second Chance Act is a common sense, evidenced-based approach to improve public safety by lowering recidivism rates of individuals released from incarceration.

Finally, I encourage the Committee to consider increasing the cap on spending from the Crime Victim Fund. As you are aware, the Crime Victim Fund, which is not financed by taxpayer dollars but by fines, forfeitures, and other penalties paid by federal criminal offenders, plays a vital role in aiding more than 4,400 agencies nationwide in providing services to victims of serious crime. The administration's 2011 budget calls for a cap of \$800 million on spending from the Fund. Due to expanded set-aside amounts for certain programs, such as the \$100 million for victims of domestic violence, this spending cap may inadvertently result in substantial cuts for other programs paid for out of the Fund. I therefore respectfully request that you increase the cap to \$867 million to support assistance programs, and that the proposed set-aside of \$100 million for victims of domestic violence be funded from the remaining balance in the Fund.

Thank you for your leadership in this critical area and for your consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,



Jim Webb  
United States Senator