

September 3, 2019

Senator Brian Schatz
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Schatz:

The undersigned organizations write to thank you for introducing S. 2286, the *Improving Justice Programs through Science Act*. We applaud your leadership on this issue and would like to reaffirm the importance of the Office of Justice Programs' (OJP) Science Advisory Board. While the Administration decided not to renew the Board, we hope Congress will follow your lead and establish this important advisory body in law.

The Science Advisory Board was chartered in 2010 and, before the Trump Administration declined to renew the board's charter, served as a bridge between criminal justice research and practice. This legislation would reestablish the board, and in following with its original charter, ensure that the Board provides review of research, statistics, and grant programs at OJP. Additionally, the legislation would direct the board to help ensure that OJP programs are scientifically sound and pertinent to policymakers and practitioners. To accomplish this goal, the board will have members from a set of diverse scientific disciplines, research interests, and criminal justice expertise including local, state, and tribal justice.

This legislation is critically important as the Department of Justice begins implementing criminal justice reform and evidence-based policies are more important than ever. The previous Science Advisory Board worked with staff at the Department of Justice to create guidelines for implementing and evaluating efforts to reduce crime, strategies to address diminishing response rates to critical Department of Justice surveys, and methods for police departments to better communicate with the communities they serve.

Our organizations represent scientific and professional societies that agree the Department of Justice should be provided with scientifically-sound advice in order to enhance the overall impact and performance of its programs and ensure the Office of Justice Programs' adherence to the highest levels of scientific rigor. Thank you for working to reestablish this important advisory body.

Sincerely,

American Anthropological Association
American Political Science Association
American Psychological Association
American Statistical Association
Council of Professional Associations on Federal Statistics
Crime & Justice Research Alliance
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Society for Personality and Social Psychology
Society for Research in Child Development