



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 4, 2017

The Honorable John Culberson, Chair
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jose Serrano, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

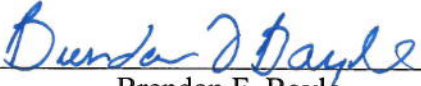
Dear Chairman Culberson and Ranking Member Serrano:

As the Committee begins writing the Fiscal Year 2018 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully request increased funding for the Department of Justice's Sexual Assault Kit Initiative at least at the level the committee allocated in Fiscal Year 2016.


Developed and Launched in 2015, the National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative, administered by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), is an innovative program that provides funding through a competitive grant program to support the comprehensive reform of jurisdictions' approaches to sexual assault cases resulting from evidence found in sexual assault kits that have never been submitted to a crime laboratory. The goal of the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative is to complement other proven federal programming that targets the rape kit backlog and the creation of a coordinated community response that ensures just resolution to these cases whenever possible through a victim-centered approach, as well as to build jurisdictions' capacity to prevent the development of conditions that lead to high numbers of unsubmitted sexual assault kits in the future.

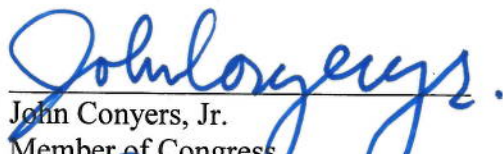
In FY 2016, Congress appropriated \$45 million for the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative. This funding was continued for FY 2017, with an across-the-board 0.2% rescission per last year's continuing resolution. For FY 2018, we respectfully request that the committee fund this program at least at the level allocated for FY 2016, although further investment is critical to eliminating the rape kit backlog that plagues law enforcement and sexual assault victims nationwide.

Sincerely,



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress


André Carson
Member of Congress


Steve Cohen
Member of Congress


John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress


Ryan A. Costello
Member of Congress


Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress


Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Vincente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

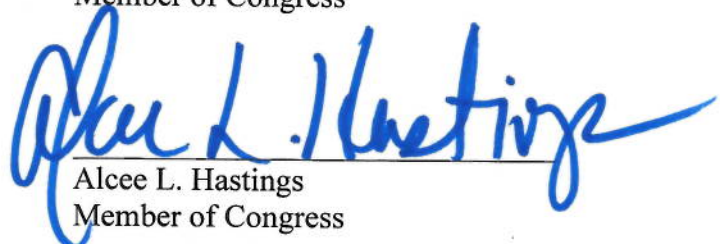

Barbara Comstock
Member of Congress

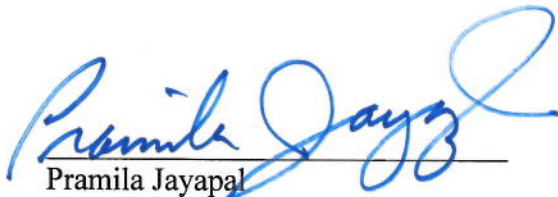

Jim Costa
Member of Congress


Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress


Val Butler Demings
Member of Congress


Dwight Evans
Member of Congress


Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



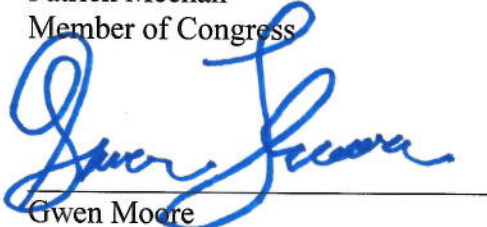
Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress



Patrick Meehan
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



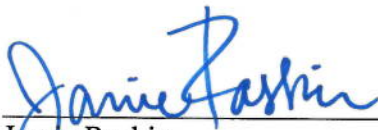
Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



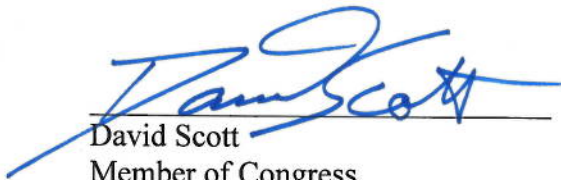
Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman

Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

Frederica S. Wilson

Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

A. Donald McEachin

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

Donald S. Beyer Jr.

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress