



# NNOAC *Insight*

*The Official Position of the National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition*

*February 2025*

## **BYRNE JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT (JAG) PROGRAM**

As narcotic officers we cannot – and will never – accept the high costs of substance abuse, substance use disorders, and drug-related crime as the norm. We have knocked on too many doors to break the devastating news to families and friends that a loved one died of an accidental overdose or was killed in a drugged driving accident or drug-related violence. We have rescued too many children from toxic meth labs and abuse-ridden crack houses, and we have saved countless lives by administering overdose reversal medications. We have seen too many promising young lives destroyed by the disease of substance use disorders, and we have watched too many of our brothers and sisters die in the line of duty at the hands of drug-fueled, violent criminals. NNOAC members know that every one of these costs is preventable. **We have dedicated our lives to reducing these costs, and Byrne JAG is one of the most important tools that we have.**

**CONGRESS SHOULD APPROPRIATE \$519 MILLION AFTER CARVEOUTS FOR THE  
BYRNE JAG FORMULA PROGRAM IN FY 2025/2026**

**&**

**ENSURE RESOURCES ARE REFOCUSED BACK TO LAW ENFORCEMENT**

**As long as international drug trafficking organizations continue to violate U.S. borders, and as long as drug dealers do business across state lines, the Federal government has a duty and responsibility to support multi-jurisdictional law enforcement efforts to address this criminal behavior that is killing Americans.**

The Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) formula program is the most important program supporting multi-jurisdictional law enforcement in America, and it is the top federal affairs priority of the National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition (NNOAC). While the most recent funding authorization level for the Byrne JAG program was \$1.1 billion, Congress only funded the program at \$345 million in FY 2024 (after carve-outs). **The NNOAC strongly urges Congress to restore FY 2025 and 2026 Byrne JAG formula funding to the FY 2010 level of \$519 million (after carveouts).**

When appropriations carve-outs are taken into account, Byrne JAG funding available to states has been slashed significantly since 2010. Additionally, while some Byrne JAG funds have been diverted to fund much needed prevention and treatment efforts, this has come at the expense of critical multi-jurisdictional law enforcement efforts. **Congress should refocus resources on supporting law enforcement initiatives.**

**Background:**

America’s narcotic officers witness the daily devastation caused by illegal drug manufacturers, traffickers, and dealers. These criminals perpetrate “chemical attacks” on our streets by creating and feeding a growing number of addictions to dangerous narcotics. In 2022, more than 110,000 American lives were lost as a direct result of drug poisonings - associated with both illegal and legal drugs - according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This number does not include those lives lost as a result of drug-related vehicle accidents or drug-related turf violence. The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has estimated that the annual cost illegal drugs, tobacco, and alcohol impose on our society exceeds \$740 billion, affecting our health systems, law enforcement, welfare system, and the business community.

As narcotic officers, we cannot – and will never – accept this as the norm. Byrne JAG-funded task forces have played a vital role in apprehending drug dealers, dismantling trafficking organizations, and removing illicit drugs off American streets. Byrne JAG has been especially effective in fostering the development of multi-jurisdictional drug task forces, which have established best practices in information sharing, case deconfliction, and institutional coordination against local and regional drug threats. This collaboration has maximized the impact of state and local resources, with one study estimating that for every federal dollar (\$1) invested in the Byrne JAG program, at least ten dollars (\$10) of state, county, and municipal funds are committed to joint enforcement efforts.

The key to success lies in local control of these task forces and effective information sharing among and across local, state, and federal jurisdictions. Byrne JAG has resulted in thousands of prosecutions of high-level drug distributors, thousands of meth lab busts, millions of doses of narcotics seized, and many lives saved. Despite these successes, the problem persists, in part due to inadequate resources. The number of task forces has dwindled just as accidental overdose deaths have surged, highlighting the urgent need for additional resources to continue fighting against drug traffickers.

**Our Ask:**

The importance of multi-jurisdictional law enforcement task forces, partially supported by the Byrne JAG Program, is widely recognized by members of the House and Senate. The program has enjoyed bipartisan and bicameral support throughout its history thanks to the outstanding results it has enabled law enforcement to generate.

State and local narcotic officers put their lives on the line every day to protect American families and communities. Byrne JAG funding is essential to ensure continued progress in combating illegal drugs, their purveyors, and their devastating effects on or nation.

**Congress must restore funding for the Byrne JAG formula program in FY 2025 and 2026 appropriations to the FY 2010 level of \$519 million (after carve-outs) and ensure resources are refocused back to law enforcement.**