



Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D. C. 20530

December 13, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Leader McCarthy, and Leader McConnell:

I write to emphasize the critical importance of fully funding the Department of Justice's (Department) \$37.7 billion budget request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023.

The Department is charged with keeping the American people safe from a broad range of evolving threats facing our communities. These threats include the dangers posed by hostile nation-states, terrorist groups, and cyber criminals who seek to undermine our democratic and economic institutions; by violent crime and gun violence, which threaten the safety of our communities; and by drug trafficking gangs and cartels that fuel the opioid crisis in our country. Given the funding challenges the Department already faced in FY 2022, maintaining the current funding level under a continuing resolution will make it more difficult to address these threats.

The dedicated agents, attorneys, and staff at the Department are working tirelessly to protect the American public from these threats. But in many cases, we have had to tackle these challenges with funding levels that have not kept pace with changes in the threat landscape. The U.S. Attorneys' Offices are on the front lines of the Department's work to keep Americans safe, but since FY 2012 their budget has increased by only an average of two percent per year, and we have seen an absolute decrease in the number of Assistant United States Attorneys since FY 2020. Other components of the Department have faced similar funding shortfalls. For example, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives was funded only to address basic inflation in FY 2022—not the essential program growth needed to address current challenges facing our communities. These resource constraints complicate our efforts to ensure public safety.

It is essential that the Department receives the resources we need to address critical priorities, including those relating to violent crime, terrorism, and cybersecurity. Our requested budget would enable us to prioritize the apprehension and prosecution of violent criminals; to prevent the flow of deadly drugs into our communities; to deter and prosecute hate crimes and combat discrimination; to protect consumers and promote competition; and to increase the number of immigration judges and correctional officers to carry out our responsibilities in administering the nation's immigration court system and federal detention and correctional systems. Our request also includes critical increases to our grant programs, which support state and local law enforcement in their efforts to prevent crime, reduce violence, and assist victims of crime.

By contrast, a continuing resolution with inadequate funding for the Department will mean, among other things, fewer agents and attorneys to investigate and prosecute violent crime. It will mean fewer resources to stop fentanyl and related substances from being brought into our communities. And it will mean fewer grants awarded to states and localities to support local law enforcement and the victims of crime.

In short, the Department's FY 2023 budget of \$37.7 billion helps ensure that there will be adequate resources to tackle many of the challenges Americans are facing in communities across the country. I urge you to finalize a bipartisan appropriations bill that funds the Department at the requested level so that we can fulfill our mission to keep the American people safe.

Sincerely,



Merrick B. Garland
Attorney General