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ARMED SERVICES

EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

October 26, 2005

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf
Chairman
Subcommittee on Science,
State, Justice and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Richard C. Shelby
Chairman
Subcommittee Commerce,
Justice and Science
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Alan B. Mollohan
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Science, State,
Justice and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice and Science
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Wolf, Chairman Shelby, Ranking Member Mollohan, and Ranking Member Mikulski:

As you prepare for conference on the fiscal year 2006 appropriations bill for the Department of Justice, we respectfully request your support of Minnesota's CriMNet Program. Funding for this program will help integrate criminal justice information statewide. In order to achieve this, we are seeking an appropriation of $3.3 million for the CriMNet Program.

Inaccurate and inconsistent identification of individuals within the criminal justice system is a major issue in Minnesota. There is currently no statewide approach for sharing identification information. The CriMNet Program is addressing this gap by developing an identification protocol – a set of standards and rules – which will establish how to identify offenders and individuals.

In addition, an important piece of criminal justice information integration is automatic workflow which refers to the flow or routing of information between users, agencies or other points of exchange based on events. The CriMNet Program has developed a technology hub or backbone that acts as a transfer point for information. This technology allows an entity to submit data and have it delivered to many different recipient entities.

Finally, the CriMNet Program provides grants which continue to build on the foundation that has already been established at the local level. The CriMNet Program has awarded $7.2 million in state and federal funds to locals for integration planning and implementation between 2002-

2005. As you know, local criminal justice agencies are willing to share information but often do not have the resources to achieve integration goals locally. In addition to distributing funding for local integration projects, the CriMNet Program is currently working on a plan to provide model integration plans for the medium and smaller counties/jurisdictions in Minnesota and providing the needed business and technical assistance for local jurisdictions to move forward. Local integration allows multiple offices across a jurisdiction to share information which results in a more efficient criminal justice system.

We support the CriMNet language which was included in the House version of the FY06 Science, State, Justice and Commerce Appropriations Act. As you work to complete a conference report, we respectfully request that you include an appropriation of $3.3 million for the CriMNet Program.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

John Kline
Member of Congress

Mark Kennedy
Member of Congress

Norm Coleman
Senator

Mark Dayton
Senator

Jim Ramstad
Member of Congress

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

James Oberstar
Member of Congress