

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 9, 2024

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Financial Services
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Hagerty
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Financial Services
248 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Van Hollen and Ranking Member Hagerty:

We write in strong support of funding the Drug-Free Communities (DFC) program, authorized by section 8203 of Subtitle K of the SUPPORT Act (P.L. 115-271) and the training and technical assistance authorized by section 8204, from within the appropriated amount for this program, at the highest possible level in FY 2025. The final FY 2024 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act appropriated \$109 million for the DFC program and \$2.5 million from within the total for the National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute (the Institute). We are hopeful that any increases in FY 2025 funding for the DFC program fund new grants to increase the scale and scope of community-based prevention efforts to address the nation's worsening drug crises.

In the midst of the devastating drug overdose epidemic, the DFC program warrants the highest possible funding level because it has proven effective in reducing youth substance use. According to independent research in communities where DFC coalitions exist, rates of past 30-day use among middle school students for alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and prescription drugs declined by 26.0%, 36.4%, 21.2% and 16.7%, respectively among FY 2021 DFC coalitions. Among high school students, rates for alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and prescription drugs declined by 27.6%, 44.2%, 23.0% and 34.0% respectively among FY 2021 DFC coalitions.¹

DFC coalitions exist in 751 communities across the nation and provide support to 2.6 million middle school students and 3.5 million high school students. The program requires a community to demonstrate local commitment before it is eligible to receive federal funds, which means that at least 12 sectors within the community must come together to plan and implement evidence-based programs that will meet the community's unique needs in reducing drug use. All grantees are required to provide a dollar-for-dollar match in non-federal funds, up to the maximum grant amount of \$125,000 per year.

The required emphasis on local data collection, community buy-in and participation among multiple sectors is central to the DFC coalitions' success and allows grantees to respond effectively to all drug trends.

¹ ICF (2022). Drug-Free Communities (DFC) Support Program National Cross-Site Evaluation: End-of-Year 2022 Report. Washington, DC: Office of National Drug Control Policy.

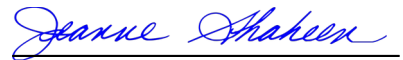
For these reasons, we urge you to fund the Drug-Free Communities program at the highest possible level in FY 2025.

For any questions or concerns, please contact Michael Kans for Senator Shaheen's office at Michael_Kans@shaheen.senate.gov or Michael Perkins for Senator Grassley's office at Michael_Perkins@judiciary-rep.senate.gov.

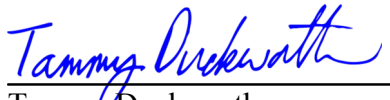
Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



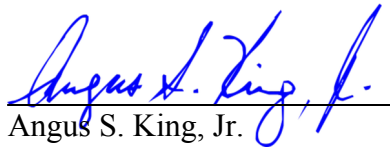
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



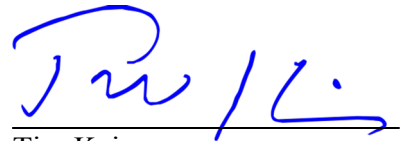
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



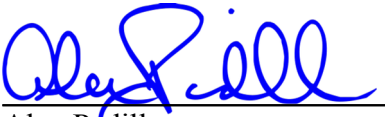
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



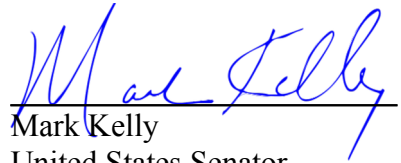
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

United States Senate

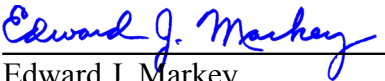
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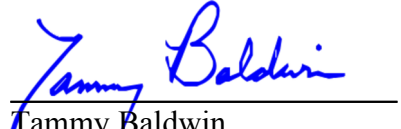
Alex Padilla
United States Senator



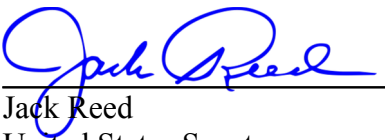
Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



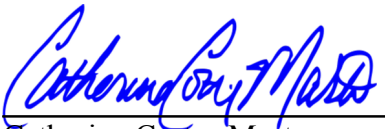
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



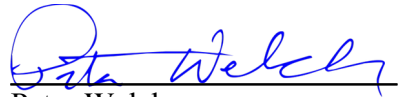
Richard J. Durbin
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Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Peter Welch
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Tina Smith
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Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



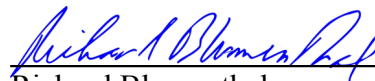
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



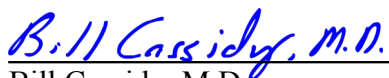
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



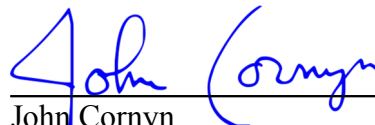
Benjamin L. Cardin
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Roger Marshall, M.D.
United States Senator




Bill Cassidy, M.D.
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John Cornyn
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United States Senator



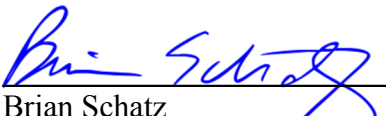
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator




Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



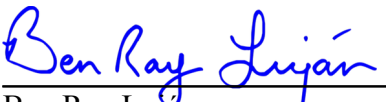
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



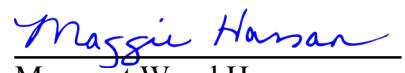
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Maggie Hassan
United States Senator



Ted Budd
United States Senator