



NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

November 2, 2011

The Honorable Jay Inslee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Inslee:

On behalf of the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) and the 3,083 elected sheriffs nationwide, I am writing in strong support of the Department of Justice Global Advisory Committee Authorization Act of 2011.

Database interoperability and information sharing among federal, state, and local enforcement agencies is a critical component to ensuring the safety and security of the nation and its citizens. As such, it is essential that federal, state, and local law enforcement are afforded the ability to come together to discuss and develop consistent solutions to database interoperability and information sharing shortfalls. To address these issues, the Department of Justice (DOJ) established the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative Advisory Committee (GAC), which advises the Attorney General on improving information sharing and database interoperability protocol. Currently, the GAC consists of 32 representatives from law enforcement, corrections, and criminal justice organizations, including the National Sheriffs' Association.

The legislation further enhances the efforts of the DOJ and the GAC. The bill expresses Congress' support for the Global Advisory Committee; enables the Attorney General to provide funding and technical assistance and support to the GAC; and would encourage the adoption of the GAC's recommendations by state and local jurisdictions throughout the United States. Furthermore, the legislation includes a requirement, for the sole purpose of data-collection, that every applicant for DOJ/DHS database or intelligence sharing funding would have to describe how their proposed system either conforms with or deviates from the Global standards. This data-collection method will be critical to assisting the GAC in identifying and understanding where gaps exist in information sharing and database interoperability nationwide.

Enabling the criminal justice community to collaborate and establish consistent solutions to database interoperability and information sharing is an integral component to the continued partnership among federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. The nation's sheriffs stand ready to assist you in the passage of this vital legislation during the 112th Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul H. Fitzgerald".

Sheriff Paul H. Fitzgerald
President