

# **NCSL Standing Committee on Law, Criminal Justice & Public Safety**

## **POLICY DIRECTIVES AND RESOLUTIONS**

**2021 Policy Week Review Call  
Sept. 20-24, 2021**

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1 **COMMITTEE:**                   **LAW, CRIMINAL JUSTICE & PUBLIC SAFETY**

2 **POLICY:**                       **CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

3 **TYPE:**                         **EXISTING POLICY DIRECTIVE**

4 It is the policy of the National Conference of State Legislatures to advance and defend a  
5 balanced, dynamic criminal justice partnership between governments at the local, state,  
6 and federal levels while preserving traditional areas of state authority in this area of the  
7 law.

8  
9 NCSL urges Congress and the Administration to avoid federalizing crime policy and  
10 substituting national laws for state and local policy decisions affecting criminal and  
11 juvenile justice. Federal jurisdiction should be reserved for areas where a national  
12 problem has been identified and states are unable to adequately provide solutions due  
13 to scope, or is required to protect federal constitutional rights. The federal government  
14 should partner with states to examine ways to avoid unnecessary preemption of state  
15 laws; and should strive to maintain its current financial commitments to existing state-  
16 federal partnership programs.

17  
18 NCSL believes that federal actions must recognize that states and local governments  
19 have the predominant responsibility to ensure public safety and the administration of  
20 justice, and must adhere to fundamental principles of federalism in all areas of criminal  
21 justice, including but not limited to:

22  
23 **Improvement of the Structure of State Criminal Justice Systems**

24 NCSL urges the federal government to include states in the development stages and on  
25 the board of any commissions or task forces that work to improve or review state  
26 criminal justice structures. NCSL insists that the federal government not infringe on the  
27 legitimate rights of the states to determine their own criminal laws, but shall include  
28 them in the process of working to create better state criminal justice systems overall.

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29 As states strive to improve policies and practices related to criminal justice, NCSL  
30 supports direct participation by state policymakers in any federal policy efforts or  
31 proposed legislation to redefine how those relationships should be strengthened.

32

### 33 **Federal Financial Assistance**

34 States continue to improve criminal justice systems and policies and recognize that  
35 federal funding is sometimes necessary to implement state reforms in this area.

36 Funding levels for Department of Justice grants and reimbursements to states should  
37 be maintained or increased. These programs include the Edward Byrne Memorial  
38 Justice Assistance Grant (Byrne JAG) grant program, the Second Chance Act grant  
39 program, the State Criminal Alien Assistance state reimbursement program (SCAAP),  
40 the Violence Against Women grant programs (VAWA), and the Community Oriented  
41 Policing Services grant programs (COPS). NCSL also supports any other federal grant  
42 program that seeks to assist states in addressing state criminal justice issues, such as  
43 school violence or opioid abuse reduction.

44 NCSL opposes Congressional proposals or federal regulations that would withhold a  
45 portion of state Byrne/JAG funds, COPS funds, SCAAP funds, or any other state  
46 criminal justice funds as a penalty for noncompliance with federal criminal justice  
47 policies. NCSL opposes the withholding of any federal criminal justice funding as a  
48 penalty for state policy choices. NCSL urges the federal government to respect state  
49 criminal justice priorities and advance change through partnerships rather than  
50 mandates. Where new federal grant programs to states are created, NCSL maintains  
51 that funding should be directed to states rather than pass directly to local governments.

52

### 53 **Sex Offender Registration**

54 NCSL opposes federal mandates concerning registration of sex offenders, in particular  
55 those contained in the Title I SORNA provisions of the Adam Walsh Child Protection  
56 and Safety Act of 2006. The mandates imposed by this Act are not only preemptive, but  
57 they are also inflexible and in some instances not able to be implemented by states.  
58 States should be permitted to classify and penalize sex offenders and establish

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59 registration and notification requirements in accordance with their own state laws,  
60 particularly with respect to juveniles. States should define and decide which juvenile  
61 offenders meet criteria for sex offender registration and be afforded the flexibility to  
62 implement state procedures that best address this population.

63  
64 The federal government should provide technological support and federal funding  
65 assistance to states with regard to sex offender registration and public notice systems,  
66 including cooperation with the federal National Sex Offender Public Website (NCOPW).  
67 NCSL supports frequent and meaningful communication between the Department of  
68 Justice and state policymakers and implementing agencies so that information on  
69 procedures that meet or fail to meet federal guidelines and statutory requirements are  
70 effectively conveyed to the states.

71  
72 NCSL urges the federal government to interpret “substantial compliance” as called for in  
73 the SORNA provisions of the Adam Walsh Act to allow state flexibility for matters such  
74 as tier systems, retroactivity, and juvenile registration, and allow for substantial  
75 implementation as long as a state’s compliance efforts have not frustrated the primary  
76 purpose of the Act. NCSL calls upon the federal government to exercise the utmost  
77 flexibility in determining whether to penalize states that are working in good faith toward  
78 compliance with federal law. States should not be responsible and penalized for  
79 absence of compliance by sovereign tribal jurisdictions.

80  
81 **Juvenile Justice**

82 States must preserve authority to determine which juveniles s involved with the justice  
83 system offenders are treated like adults, under what circumstances, and for how long,  
84 with regard to sex offender registration and all other matters of juvenile and criminal  
85 justice policy.

86  
87 NCSL supports the goals of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, and  
88 urges the federal government to provide state flexibility in achieving these objectives.

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89 NCSL also supports the role of the federal government in providing states with financial  
90 resources to strengthen juvenile justice systems. This includes federal funding for state  
91 juvenile justice programs. Federal involvement should be confined to providing grants  
92 and technical assistance to states that facilitate effective juvenile justice policies; and  
93 the federal government should not attach mandates to the receipt of related federal  
94 funds, but should encourage states to implement effective policies and techniques for  
95 addressing juvenile delinquency, crime and justice.

96

### 97 **Drug Control**

98 NCSL supports a strong intergovernmental partnership to fight the illegal use of drugs;  
99 and asks that development of broad federal drug control strategies seek and include  
100 NCSL and other state and local consultation. NCSL supports a balanced federal  
101 approach for interdiction, law enforcement, prevention, education and treatment. NCSL  
102 encourages the federal government to take a proactive role in securing United States  
103 borders against importation of illicit drugs; ~~substance misuse~~ ~~prescription drug abuse~~  
104 and in detection and deterrence of interstate drug trafficking, including cooperation with  
105 state and local law enforcement. While money for law enforcement is critical, federal  
106 dollars also should help support diversion, treatment and prevention efforts, including  
107 but not limited to interdisciplinary drug court funding unaccompanied by testing or other  
108 mandates.

109

110 NCSL supports federal demonstration, funding and training roles that assist states in  
111 implementation and use of modern information systems that aid in detection and  
112 prevention of drug abuse, and for remediation of sites that have been used in illegal  
113 drug manufacture. NCSL encourages federal leadership and resources that assist state  
114 and local governments in other activities that address education, prevention,  
115 enforcement, and treatment related to illicit drugs, substance misuse, and emerging  
116 drug threats, including but not limited to synthetic drugs and opioid abuse. NCSL  
117 opposes federal mandates or other preemptive policies with regard to addressing drug  
118 abuse and related drug crimes.

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## 120 **Sentencing, Corrections and Recidivism Reduction**

121 Federal jurisdiction for crimes also covered under state law can create competition to  
122 escalate punishments and build more prisons. This competition is shortsighted,  
123 expensive and unnecessary. The national government should refrain from making  
124 federal crimes of state offenses or from enhancing sentences for crimes that are more  
125 properly the domain of states. NCSL supports federal leadership and funding for state  
126 ~~criminal-offender~~ reentry and reintegration initiatives and criminal justice reinvestment  
127 approaches. These initiatives assist states in addressing recidivism ~~and~~ reentry, and of  
128 ~~offenders back into healthy~~ communities and promotion of a law-abiding lifestyle in  
129 meaningful, cost-effective ways. State and local governments should be afforded  
130 maximum flexibility in using federal funds that support within criminal justice systems,  
131 including but not limited to ~~offender needs for~~ drug treatment and mental health  
132 services. NCSL opposes any legislation that would restrict state flexibility in sentencing  
133 and corrections policy. NCSL urges the federal government to address federal  
134 expungement requirements which can impede reentry and job security.

135 NCSL also supports full funding of the Second Chance Act which provides grants to  
136 states that are used to promote the safe and successful re-integration of individuals who  
137 have been incarcerated. This in turn reduces recidivism, increases public safety and  
138 assists states in better responding to the growing numbers of people released from  
139 prisons and jails who are returning to the community.

140 The issues surrounding the creation of sound state policy with respect to justice  
141 involved individuals with behavioral health needs is of growing importance to states.  
142 ~~Congress has also become aware of this issue and hopes to address it.~~ NCSL supports  
143 federal legislation that would enhance state research and implementation of sound  
144 policies that address behavioral health needs of justice-involved in prisons. ~~NCSL also~~  
145 ~~supports federal legislation that seeks to partner with states as they create policy~~  
146 ~~decisions regarding the mentally ill.~~ NCSL supports federal legislation that seeks to  
147 enhance state treatment courts (mental health courts, drug courts, and veteran's  
148 courts), training for state professionals that work with the justice involved with

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149 behavioral health needs, and funding that will complement state innovative programs in  
150 this area.

### 151 **Crime Records and Information**

152 NCSL supports such state-federal information systems and sharing partnerships in the  
153 states; and asserts that records available via such systems should continue to be  
154 predominately state-maintained and that state policies for dissemination of those  
155 records should be recognized and adhered to under the systems. NCSL supports  
156 federal assistance in improving state criminal history records and related information  
157 systems. NCSL opposes preemption of state authority related to crime records and  
158 information.

159 NCSL supports the use of ~~the~~ all federal databases including, but not limited to the  
160 nterstate Identification Index (III) for exchange of criminal history record information; and  
161 the National Criminal Information Center (NCIC) for crime record and other criminal  
162 justice information including fugitives, stolen properties and missing persons. These  
163 systems provide means for information sharing under interstate compacts such as the  
164 National Crime Prevention and Privacy Compact, the Interstate Compact for Adult  
165 Offender Supervision, and the Interstate Compact for Juveniles. ~~NCSL supports such~~  
166 ~~state-federal information systems and sharing partnerships in the states; and asserts~~  
167 ~~that records available via such systems should continue to be predominately state~~  
168 ~~maintained and that state policies for dissemination of those recores should be~~  
169 ~~recognized and adhered to under the systems. NCSL supports federal assistance in~~  
170 ~~improving state criminal history records and related information systems. NCSL~~  
171 ~~opposes any preemption of state authority related to crime records and information.~~

### 172 **DNA Records**

173 NCSL supports federal non-preemptive initiatives that use DNA records in crime-solving  
174 and the administration of justice, including the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS).  
175 Federal funds, including those for DNA analysis backlog elimination, should support the  
176 use of DNA as an interstate investigative tool while adhering to state law and placing no  
177 mandates on states regarding collection, dissemination or use of records.

### 178 **Victims**

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179 NCSL supports a strong state-federal partnership to assist crime victims; and urges  
180 continued federal assistance to states provided for in the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA).  
181 NCSL encourages the Congress to preserve this primary means by which the federal  
182 government provides support to crime victims and their families, via state crime victims  
183 and assistance programs. NCSL opposes arbitrary caps which result in diminished  
184 services and assistance for crime victims.

### 185 **Law Enforcement**

186 NCSL supports means for enhanced cooperation between state and federal law  
187 enforcement. NCSL opposes proposals that blur jurisdictional lines of responsibility and  
188 serve to disrupt rather than support efforts of state and local law enforcement. NCSL  
189 opposes proposals that seek to remove from states and communities the responsibility  
190 for determining disciplinary procedures for state and local law enforcement.

191 NCSL supports the full funding of the [Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant](#)  
192 [\(Byrne JAG\) grant program and the](#) Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Act.  
193 COPS Hiring Grants have been instrumental in enhancing the effectiveness of  
194 community policing in America. Federal funding for the COPS program relieves the  
195 strain on state budgets to provide adequate and effective law enforcement personnel.

196  
197 NCSL opposes proposals to shift traditional federal responsibility for civil immigration  
198 enforcement to state or local law enforcement agencies and personnel. State and local  
199 jurisdictions should have the authority to enter into cooperative, voluntary agreements  
200 with the federal government for this or other traditionally federal enforcement matters,  
201 but should not be compelled by federal law to do so.

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1 **COMMITTEE: LAW, CRIMINAL JUSTICE & PUBLIC SAFETY**

2 **POLICY: IMMIGRATION REFORM**

3 **TYPE: POLICY DIRECTIVE**

4 The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) recognizes the contributions  
5 immigrants and refugees make to our state economies, cultures and communities while  
6 also recognizing the challenges facing our country in matters related to immigration.

7 Federal immigration policy must strike a balance among core principles of our  
8 democracy: preserving the safety and security of our nation, encouraging the economic  
9 strength of our states and communities, and recognizing our history as a nation of  
10 immigrants. The impact of the federal government's immigration policy  
11 decisions is directly felt by the states who not only implement programs required by  
12 federal law but also encourage the integration of immigrants into the economic, social  
13 and civic life of their adopted communities. States bear the costs of immigration in many  
14 areas including education, health and law enforcement systems, with limited federal  
15 reimbursement.

### 16 **Immigration Reform**

17 State legislators call on Congress and the Administration to enact immigration reform  
18 that enhances our border security and addresses the imbalance in the state-federal  
19 relationship. Immigration reform and implementation requires true collaboration between  
20 state and federal leaders. Our nation's immigration laws must not contain unfunded  
21 mandates nor preempt areas of existing state authority. Federal immigration reform will  
22 not be comprehensive unless it addresses the fiscal and economic impact of  
23 immigration on the states.

24 Federal immigration reform legislation must also provide a path to citizenship  
25 for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) immigrants and immigrants who were  
26 brought to the U.S. as children (DREAMers), have lived most of their lives in the U.S.,  
27 and Identify as American. These immigrants have contributed to our economy through  
28 work and have paid taxes and have been productive members of society.

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## 29 SECURITY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

### 30 Border Security & Enforcement

31 Securing all of America's borders, ports, and airports is essential to preserving our  
32 national security and maintaining the safety of all Americans. NCSL urges the federal  
33 government to fulfill its responsibilities with regard to border security and encourages  
34 a renewed state-federal cooperation in countering human trafficking, weapons and drug  
35 smuggling. NCSL urges the federal government to increase its enforcement of these  
36 crimes.

37 NCSL supports full, federal funding for increases in Department of Homeland Security  
38 border enforcement [systems and processes](#) ~~personnel~~ where they are most needed  
39 and necessary ~~improvements in facilities, technology and infrastructure.~~ [to create a plan  
40 for the effective use of new technologies and infrastructure at the borders.](#)

### 41 The Role of State and Local Law Enforcement

42 NCSL is strongly opposed to any efforts to shift enforcement of civil immigration law to  
43 state and local law enforcement agencies. State legislators believe that enforcement of  
44 federal civil immigration law is a federal responsibility and that state involvement in  
45 immigration enforcement activities should ~~only be a state option~~ [be discretionary with  
46 each state.](#)

47 NCSL opposes efforts to criminalize violations of civil federal immigration law in an effort  
48 to shift federal enforcement responsibilities to state and local law officers. State and  
49 local government law enforcement and public safety personnel must already  
50 incarcerate, detain and transport illegal immigrants who have committed crimes, without  
51 adequate federal funding. NCSL strongly supports full reimbursement to states for the  
52 State Criminal Alien Assistance Program (SCAAP). ~~The current SCAAP program only  
53 provides 17% reimbursement of current costs, according to a recent General  
54 Accountability Office study.~~ NCSL also opposes any effort to coerce state participation  
55 in enforcement of federal immigration law by withholding SCAAP program funds.

## 56 EMPLOYMENT [VERIFICATION](#) [RELATED MIGRATION](#)

### 57 [Workforce Visa Reforms](#)

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58 [NCSL supports workforce immigration reforms that improve the current worker visa](#)  
59 [programs and guide the nation towards economic recovery. Many states rely](#)  
60 [on migrant labor for key industries such as agriculture and farm work. The federal](#)  
61 [government should implement immigration reforms that provide temporary or](#)  
62 [permanent legal status to these workers in order to stabilize the workforce in](#)  
63 [these affected industries.](#)

#### 64 **Worksite Enforcement**

65 NCSL believes that ~~while employment verification~~ [worksite employment verification is](#)  
66 [a critical component of overall immigration enforcement, it is an area that requires](#)  
67 [reform and improvements in order maximize effectiveness and efficient use of](#)  
68 [resources.](#) ~~is a critical component of enforcement requiring federal reforms.~~ NCSL  
69 opposes federal efforts to treat state governments differently from the private sector in  
70 meeting federal ~~employment verification requirements~~ [requirements designed to identify](#)  
71 [workers who are not authorized to work, as well as employers who knowingly hire](#)  
72 [unauthorized workers.](#)

#### 73 **Enforcement Activities**

74 NCSL believes that federal enforcement activities – at the worksite or in communities -  
75 must be coordinated with state and local government. NCSL urges the federal  
76 government to be mindful that the states bear the primary responsibility for the children  
77 who are separated from their families as a result of federal enforcement activities. NCSL  
78 supports federal coordination with child welfare and law enforcement agencies to [end](#)  
79 [the policy of family separation, take swift action to locate and reunite families, including](#)  
80 [families that may have been separated by deportation and](#) ~~guarantee that children are~~  
81 ~~not endangered.~~ ~~and that their best interests are protected.~~

#### 82 **ELIMINATING COST-SHIFTS TO THE STATES**

##### 83 **State Impact Assistance**

84 [NCSL supports the provision of flexible federal financial resources to states in order](#)  
85 [to implement and execute immigration reform efforts. While states have been able to](#)  
86 [serve immigrant populations with COVID-19 stimulus resources for health care,](#)  
87 [cash assistance, and food assistance, these funds are temporary. State impact grants](#)

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88 ~~continue to be an important component of the state-federal partnership in immigration~~  
89 ~~reform as these represent a~~ Immigration reform must address the fiscal impact on  
90 ~~states. A critical component for NCSL support is state impact grants,~~ a reliable,  
91 guaranteed funding ~~stream for the provision of sources to ameliorate the costs states~~  
92 ~~and localities bear in health,~~ including public  
93 health ~~services,~~ and education, ~~including and~~ English language acquisition; to  
94 immigrant populations. State impact grants ~~must~~ require state legislative  
95 appropriation, ~~while~~ providing needed flexibility and accountability.

## 96 **PERMANENT, TEMPORARY IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**

### 97 **Temporary Worker Program**

98 NCSL supports comprehensive immigration reform that includes a temporary worker  
99 program and the creation of an earned legalization program for immigrants currently in  
100 the country without authorization. ~~Such reform would increase productivity and~~  
101 ~~wages for our entire economy, stimulating job growth and increasing tax revenue~~ NCSL  
102 opposes ~~outright~~ amnesty ~~and~~ ~~Earned legalization should include appropriate fines~~  
103 ~~and penalties that are proportional to the violation.~~ NCSL opposes ~~as well as~~ federal  
104 efforts to deny benefits to legal immigrants and to citizens who are foreign born.

### 105 **Refugee Assistance**

106 NCSL supports federal efforts to assist individuals and families forced to flee their native  
107 land in fear for their personal safety. ~~The United States has a long history of welcoming~~  
108 ~~refugees and is one of the largest refugee resettlement countries in the world. The~~  
109 ~~problem of political refugees is an international one, and consequently demands the~~  
110 ~~cooperative efforts of many countries.~~

111 ~~Federal support for refugees and integration services~~ ~~federal support to states is critical~~  
112 ~~for the~~ ~~to states must not shift costs to states and must provide~~ ~~provision of~~ income and  
113 medical assistance, social services, education, employment and training and other  
114 services as needed. ~~NCSL believes that funding should be more flexible to allow states~~  
115 to respond to changing needs.

116 The federal government should provide English and citizenship instruction as well as job  
117 training to refugees, where possible, before they arrive in the United States.

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118 NCSL strongly urges the federal government to avoid further placements in areas that  
119 are already heavily impacted with refugee or Entrant populations, experiencing a  
120 shortage of rental housing for low-income households, and experiencing overcrowding  
121 in the local school system. [NCSL supports refugee placement policies that promote  
122 successful integration of refugees in the placement community. Placement should  
123 be tailored to give refugees economic, affordable housing, educational, language  
124 access, and community engagement opportunities in their new area.](#) NCSL urges the  
125 federal government to continue to work with states on the issue of secondary  
126 migration.

127 NCSL urges the federal government to continue the health screening that is currently  
128 provided to the refugees, where possible, before they arrive in the United States and to  
129 improve follow-up such as providing instruction for continued medical care to refugees  
130 in the home and increasing outreach to bridge language and cultural differences.  
131 State health screening support is critical and should not be eliminated.

132 NCSL urges the federal government to coordinate and consult with state and local  
133 governments [asis](#) an integral component of a successful placement policy and we urge  
134 the federal government to improve its efforts in this area. It is equally important to have  
135 the voluntary agencies and organizations representing refugees participate in this  
136 coordinated effort. NCSL supports extended protection [forte](#) victims of trafficking,  
137 victims of domestic violence, and unaccompanied minors. [NCSL supports  
138 continuing trafficking and domestic violence victim assistance programs through VOCA  
139 and other federal grants.](#)

## 140 **CITIZENSHIP AND INTEGRATION**

### 141 **Naturalization and Integration**

142 NCSL supports the promotion of citizenship [and reducing institutional barriers  
143 to citizenship](#) as a national priority. Delays in citizenship applications are unjustified  
144 and costly to applicants. The federal government should allocate sufficient resources for  
145 more efficient citizenship adjudication and integration processes. The costs of becoming  
146 a citizen are excessive and a barrier to those working families who seek citizenship.

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147 NCSL strongly urges the federal government to assist the states in their efforts to  
148 promote naturalization and to address all barriers to naturalization.

149

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1 **COMMITTEE:** **LAW, CRIMINAL JUSTICE & PUBLIC SAFETY**

2 **POLICY:** **CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND COURT DATA**  
3 **COLLECTION**

4 **TYPE:** **DIRECTIVE (NEW)**

5 State legislators recognize that data collection and infrastructure supporting it in the  
6 criminal justice field, including the ability to track and understand information about the  
7 people who go through state criminal justice systems, is an important component for  
8 state legislatures when making policy decisions and allocating state resources to their  
9 criminal justice, juvenile justice, and court systems. States could benefit from  
10 consultation with the U.S. Department of Justice regarding best practices in data  
11 collection and strategies for streamlining state practices to collect the best and most  
12 comprehensive information.

13  
14 The federal government is in the best position to coordinate collection and distribution of  
15 state data. Similarly, the federal government can assist states through federal grants  
16 that support state data infrastructure and collection. States would like to provide input to  
17 the U.S. Department of Justice on the data that is the most useful and ideas on how  
18 data collection can be improved and timely released. States rely on these statistics to  
19 assess and make decisions regarding their criminal justice, juvenile justice and court  
20 systems, and compare with other state's systems and therefore want to collect the most  
21 comprehensive data possible.

22  
23 The National Conference of State Legislatures supports efforts by the U.S. Department  
24 of Justice for collection of state and local criminal justice, juvenile justice, and court data  
25 that is useful for cross-state comparison in the least burdensome manner possible and  
26 public dissemination of the data in a timely and useful manner. NCSL urges U.S.  
27 Department of Justice to provide funding for and technical assistance to states,  
28 localities, and criminal and juvenile justice agencies and courts for data collection,  
29 including infrastructure and best practices.

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1 **COMMITTEE: LAW, CRIMINAL JUSTICE & PUBLIC SAFETY**

2 **POLICY: TIMELY AID TO STATES**

3 **TYPE: RESOLUTION (RENEWAL)**

4 **WHEREAS**, Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, along with devastating Western  
5 wildfires and other natural catastrophes, totaling over \$300 billion in damage made  
6 2017 the costliest year on record for disasters in the United States, according to the  
7 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and

8  
9 **WHEREAS**, Hurricane Michael on the east coast, the Camp Fire in California, and other  
10 major disasters made 2018 a deadly and expensive year from coast to coast; and

11  
12 **WHEREAS**, Congress in 2019 took over six months to appropriate long overdue  
13 disaster aid. The delay featured a government shutdown, focus on tangential policy  
14 priorities, and a general absence of productive compromise; and

15  
16 **WHEREAS**, even when Congress appropriates needed assistance in a relatively timely  
17 manner, the funds are further delayed due to inefficient disbursement to states and  
18 territories. In 2019, the Department of Housing and Urban Development took more than  
19 a year to provide guidance to disaster-stricken states and territories like Texas, Florida,  
20 California, and Puerto Rico which delayed the grant application process. Negotiations  
21 on aid for the next disaster season began and concluded before these funds were  
22 disbursed; and

23  
24 **WHEREAS**, Disasters affect states and territories in every corner of the nation, from  
25 wildfires in California, Montana, Utah, and others to hurricanes in Florida, Texas, the  
26 Midwest and more; and

27  
28 **WHEREAS**, Disasters affect every corner of affected communities – from homes,  
29 schools, roads, farms, prisons, electrical grids and hospitals suffering structural



30 damage, to the affected populations displaced across the country and the states that  
31 receive them, and more; and

32

33 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the National Conference of State  
34 Legislatures (NCSL) implores Congress to remain united in prioritizing the efficient  
35 appropriation of needed aid to disaster-stricken states and territories; and

36

37 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NCSL urges the administration to make every effort  
38 to streamline their procedures to deliver appropriated funds to governments and  
39 individuals struggling to recover from devastating disasters.