



International Association of
Chiefs of Police

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January 11, 2014

The Honorable Tim Murphy
U.S. House of Representatives
2232 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Murphy:

On behalf of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), I am writing to express our support for the *Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2013*, H.R. 3717. Everyday across the country law enforcement officers respond to disturbances or crises involving a child, youth or adult with mental illness. Law enforcement officers who face these complex situations would like to be as fully prepared as possible so that they can respond in ways that ensure the safety of the responding officers, the person in mental health crisis, and others on the scene. This legislation ensures that law enforcement and other justice system agencies have sufficient resources to expand and sustain their collaborative efforts to properly respond to persons with mental illness.

The *Helping Families in Mental Health Crisis Act of 2013* would expand the focus of the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program to allow grant funding to be used to train law enforcement officers to recognize individuals with mental illness and to properly intervene and respond to those individuals. In addition, JAG funds could be used to train corrections officers to recognize individuals with mental illness and to enhance the ability of corrections officers to address the mental health of individuals in jails and prisons. By providing funding for training programs for law enforcement and correction officers, we are ensuring that they are better equipped to respond to individuals with mental illness.

This bill also reauthorizes the *Mental Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act* for five years, ensuring the continued support for mental health courts and crisis intervention teams.

On behalf of our nation's law enforcement executives, we applaud you for introducing this important legislation. The IACP stands ready to assist you as we continue to work together on issues important to the law enforcement field and our communities.

Sincerely,

Chief Yousry Zakhary
President