Department of Justice

STATEMENT OF

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

BEFORE THE

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PRESENTED

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Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Gohmert and Members of the Subcommittee: I am

pleased to have the opportunity to discuss the Department of Justice's (DOJ) efforts to improve

the operations and management of the Office of Justice Programs (OJP). We appreciate this

Subcommittee's continued interest in eliminating duplication and waste to improve the

operations of federal grant programs.

My name is Jeff Sedgwick and I am the Acting Assistant Attorney General for OJP. As

the Acting Assistant Attorney General, I am responsible for the overall management and

oversight of OJP. This includes setting policy; ensuring that OJP policies and programs reflect

the priorities of the President, the Attorney General, and the Congress; and promoting

coordination among the OJP offices and bureaus.

Today, Mr. Chairman, I would like to describe OJP's efforts in selecting quality grant

applications to fund, how we measure the effectiveness of the programs we fund to ensure the

wise investment of taxpayer dollars, and our efforts to implement the provisions of the

Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005. Our efforts to improve the management and

selection of grants are reflected in some of OJP's accomplishments this year which I will discuss

at the end of my testimony.

The OJP Grant Process

The mission of OJP is simple: increase public safety and improve the fair administration

of justice across America through innovative leadership and programs. While most of the

responsibility for crime control and prevention rests with our Nation's State and local

governments, OJP works in partnership with federal, State, local and tribal government officials to support the justice system of the United States. OJP's partnerships provide actionable plans to all levels of government to improve the administration of justice.

Achieving our mission also requires coordination and cooperation among OJP's components which include the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the Community Capacity Development Office (CCDO), the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking (SMART).

As you know, Mr. Chairman, there are two general types of grants administered by OJP: formula and discretionary. Discretionary grants are generally awarded, most often on a competitive basis, to eligible recipients at the discretion of the awarding agency. Some discretionary grants to organizations may be awarded on a non-competitive basis and may be based on congressional direction.

Formula grants are awarded on the basis of a specific, defined formula. They are awarded directly by OJP to eligible recipients as authorized by statutes or appropriations from Congress. For a formula grant program, statutes or appropriations language specify how the funds will be allocated among the eligible recipients, as well as the method by which an applicant must demonstrate its eligibility for that funding. The award amount is calculated by a formula, and may vary among programs. Formula grant programs can be either for a specific

purpose such as, assisting juvenile offenders, activities to prevent and control crime and to improve the criminal justice system, or related to public safety in general.

The OJP grant application review process generally consists of four steps which are application review, programmatic review, financial review and award notification. During application review the application is submitted to OJP and reviewed for registration information and completeness, and to ensure the applicant meets the basic eligibility requirements defined in the solicitation. During the programmatic review, the grant manager reviews the application to make sure the information presented is reasonable, understandable, measurable, and achievable, as well as consistent with program or legislative requirements as stated in the solicitation. For competitive discretionary solicitations, this step may also include a peer review of the application. Peer Review is the process of using non-federal independent evaluators, and/or in-house or other federal agency personnel who are subject matter experts to assess the merits of an application or concept paper for federal funding. The results of programmatic review are provided to grant decision makers, who use that review along with other relevant factors to assess applications, and make ultimate funding decisions.

During the financial review stage, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) conducts a financial review of all discretionary awards and cooperative agreements to evaluate the fiscal integrity and financial capability of applicants, examine proposed costs to determine if the budget and budget narrative accurately explain project costs, and determine whether costs are reasonable, necessary, and allowable under applicable federal cost principles and agency regulations.

Finally, during the award notification stage OJP notifies an applicant that it will receive a grant award no later than the end of the fiscal year. Additionally, OJP issues a rejection letter to unsuccessful applicants thereafter.

While we make every effort to process grant applications promptly, all applications must satisfy these rigorous grant and financial management standards to ensure that OJP fulfills its financial stewardship obligations to America's taxpayers. Every grant application received by OJP, including congressionally mandated awards, passes through this multi-stage process to ensure that all applicable requirements are satisfied.

This year, in an effort to improve the transparency of the grant selection process, any grant award decisions that vary from peer reviewers recommendations will be fully documented, including the reasons why such a decision was made.

Measuring Effectiveness

In 2001, President Bush created the President's Management Agenda (PMA), a plan to improve the management and performance of the federal government. Since the PMA was rolled out, OJP has concentrated on becoming more results-oriented, more efficient and more effective. OJP is committed to these efforts to ensure that we continue to provide federal leadership in preventing and controlling crime to promote our Nation's security.

Part of that vision was an increased emphasis on measuring the results of the programs funded through OJP and focusing our resources on the most effective programs. OJP is committed to increased analysis of what works and what does not so that criminal justice policy makers at all levels of government can better decide how to invest limited public dollars.

We are committed to continuing to use the results of research and evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the programs we fund and to ensure that federal taxpayer dollars are invested both wisely and well. NIJ has conducted evaluations of OJP programs. One example is a five year study of drug courts currently underway. The preliminary results have been very encouraging, showing that offenders in drug courts received more intensive treatment, and reported less drug use than other similar offenders. The final results are expected at the end of 2009.

NIJ is also in the final stages of a five-year evaluation of the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI). Here too, the preliminary results have been very encouraging. The ex-offenders who participated in SVORI were better able to find employment and less likely to use drugs than other ex-offenders. The final results should be ready by the end of 2008.

Another example of how research is used to better inform funding decisions is the Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI). Through SASCI, U.S. Attorneys coordinated multiagency efforts to clamp down on juvenile homicide and gun-related crime. Ten cities implemented the SACSI strategy. In each of these ten sites, local researchers helped

analyze problems and develop solutions. These researchers were involved in every stage of the planning and assessment. An evaluation that NIJ released this past April showed that the SACSI strategy was effective. The sites showed dramatic decreases in the crimes they targeted. The SACSI strategy became the basis of the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, which is now operating in all 94 judicial districts.

If we are to hold our grantees accountable for their spending, OJP also must be held to high standards of accountability regarding the stewardship of public funds. In addition, Mr. Chairman, OJP focuses its grants on measuring outcomes not outputs. Our emphasis is not on measuring process, but on determining impact and results.

To that end, OJP's ability to measure the effectiveness of grant dollars was enhanced when, in January 2006, Congress passed and the President signed into law the Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005.

Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005/Grant Monitoring

As you know, the Department of Justice Reauthorization Act established the OJP Office of Audit, Assessment, and Management (OAAM). This office works to improve operating efficiency and effectiveness, as well as to enhance programmatic oversight for grant-making agencies. OAAM has three critical missions: (1) Ensure financial grant compliance and auditing of OJP's internal controls to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse; (2) Conduct programmatic assessments of DOJ grant programs; and (3) Act as a central source for grant-management

policy. To accomplish the missions above, OAAM is divided into three divisions: Audit and Review Division, Program Assessment Division, and Grants Management Division.

In January 2007, OJP published its first Monitoring Plan. This plan was jointly developed by OJP offices, OAAM, the OCFO, and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), and it included scheduled programmatic and fiscal monitoring site visits for Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. The plan was created to hold program offices accountable for oversight of their grant programs, as well as to ensure that each office has the information and tools needed to coordinate monitoring activities to the maximum extent possible. Since then, OJP has conducted quarterly reviews of the OJP/COPS Monitoring Plan to evaluate monitoring progress against the Plan, as well as to assess site visit report quality. In addition, in FY 2007, OJP program offices conducted on-site programmatic monitoring of 1,026 grants for a total of $1.9 billion in open award funding monitored. When coupled with financial reviews conducted by OJP's OCFO, OJP monitored over 1,400 grants in FY 2007, for a total of $2.7 billion in award funds monitored.

Also in FY 2007, we rolled out the Grant Assessment Tool, which provides a common, organized framework and methodology for systematically and objectively assessing risk associated with grants and/or grantees. The monitoring assessment process involves assigning a monitoring priority level to individual grants based on a standard set of criteria. This tool helps OJP grant managers prioritize monitoring activities based on potential vulnerabilities and with consistency across our bureaus and offices. In FY 2007, OJP assessed over 4,000 awards using this tool and will once again assess its open grants in September 2008.

To further enhance OJP's grant monitoring efforts, in FY 2008, we instituted a Grant

Monitoring Tool (GMT), which grant managers use to monitor grants and cooperative

agreements consistently across offices while preserving the flexibility to monitor diverse

programs and grant types effectively. The GMT requires grant managers to review all grants

against a set of 22 standard review categories to determine administrative and financial

compliance with grant-management policies, procedures, and regulatory requirements, as well as

to evaluate the programmatic progress and success of efforts funded through the grant. The GMT

will help OJP increase oversight of its grant programs by ensuring that the funds awarded to

grantees are being properly managed and that grant objectives are being met.

While improvements to grant-management and monitoring strategies are critical to

improving oversight capabilities and enhancing grant performance, individual grant review is

only one component of performance-based management. Effective program management also

requires a cumulative view of grants and projects to assess the aggregate impact of federal

funding for public safety and criminal justice programs and initiatives at the State and local

levels. OJP provides this view through the OAAM program assessment function.

Program assessment, or performance review, is a systematic, methodological approach to

collecting, integrating, and analyzing programmatic information to measure performance against

intended outcomes. In creating a program assessment function, OAAM serves as an institutional

vehicle for studying programs and providing vital programmatic information and feedback to

decision-makers and stakeholders. Using grantee-generated reporting, grant monitoring

documentation, performance measurement data, and other primary data sources, OAAM

conducts a variety of analyses, such as cost-benefit analyses and trend analysis to assess program performance and grantee compliance. This analysis also generates critical performance information which will inform future policy, budget, and funding decisions.

To further enhance the OJP grants management process, we have developed better grant-management skills and staff capabilities. For example, we developed the OJP Grant Manager's Manual (GMM), which documents policies and procedures for the administration and management of all OJP grants and grant programs. Additionally, the OJP Financial Guide provides grant recipients and subrecipients with financial management requirements to aid them in fulfilling their fiduciary responsibility to safeguard grant funds and ensure that funds are used for the purposes for which they were awarded. To ensure the new policies reflected in the GMM were effectively communicated to OJP staff and therefore implemented, OJP held GMM training for over 400 grant managers, staff accountants and other OJP employees.

Additionally, we developed an OJP-wide order to coordinate activity for grantees that may be designated as high risk. The Order outlines the responsibilities of grant-management personnel in addressing high risk grantees to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach. In FY 2009, OJP will put into practice a tiered high-risk system for grantees in which corrective actions can be taken based on the nature of identified issues. OJP responses to grantee issues may range from increased monitoring and oversight requirements, to an office-wide freezing of funds for more egregious cases of grantee non-compliance.

In FY 2008, OJP drafted a model Grant Manager Performance Work Plan (PWP). The PWP addresses all critical elements outlined in the GMM and establishes specific, measurable, achievement-based criteria for effective grants management by which performance of OJP grant-management staff are evaluated. The PWP is intended to increase accountability of staff and improve team and organizational performance by creating a results-oriented work environment for those individuals responsible for oversight of federal grant dollars.

OJP further developed its commitment to developing grant-management skills and capabilities by providing a two-day course on basic grant-management principles and effective monitoring techniques. This on-going training program is designed to provide grants management staff with the knowledge, skills, tools, and resources needed to successfully perform grant-management job functions.

DOJ is also committed to providing leadership in improving our grant-management business processes. In order to complete this goal, OJP convened teams to evaluate existing business processes and develop recommendations for improving the efficiency and standardization of those processes. For each process, deliverables included developing a document outlining the as-is process, a recommendation document on how to improve the process, and when appropriate, a functional requirements document detailing the computer needs of internal/external users. To date, OJP has utilized seven OJP-wide teams to effectively change and improve grant-related functions.

Many of OJP's bureaus and program offices have also taken additional steps to improve grant monitoring. For example, each Fiscal Year, BJA State Policy Advisors (SPA) travel to their assigned states to monitor State Administering Agencies (SAA). The contiguous 48 states and the District of Columbia are monitored annually; Alaska, Hawaii, and the five U.S. territories are monitored approximately every 18 months. When conducting these week-long onsite SAA monitoring visits, BJA staff help to ensure fiscal, programmatic and administrative integrity and accountability of all grant files, including subgrant files; and conduct a number of onsite subgrant monitoring visits with SAA staff to help assess progress and ensure grantee and subgrantee compliance with rules and regulations.

BJA also helps to ensure that the SAA monitors programs funded through its State and local sub-awards. Each SPA is in frequent contact with the SAA, providing technical assistance on a range of issues. BJA also conducts annual regional conferences where grantees attend workshops on critical grant-management skills and responsibilities. SAA grantees submit quarterly financial reports and regular programmatic performance reports that are reviewed by BJA's Programs Office.

Additionally, BJA helped develop a reporting tool for Multijurisdictional Drug Task Force performance measures and to provide technical assistance services to the task forces. The reporting tool is designed to assist SAAs in gathering data from BJA-funded multijurisdictional drug task forces. The tool was developed with extensive guidance and input from the field through a series of focus group meetings which included SAA representatives,

Multijurisdictional Drug Task Force representatives, and representatives of the National Narcotic Officers' Associations' Coalition.

In addition, OJJDP has made significant progress in expanding, implementing, and collecting performance measures to determine the effectiveness of funded programs. OJJDP's performance measures require grantees to collect data about the percentage of youth who offend or reoffend and who exhibit a desired change in behavior. The performance measures also require grantees to provide information about whether or not they are using evidence-based programming.

Not only has DOJ made strides in improving grants management skills, capabilities, and monitoring activities, but we have also made significant enhancements to improve service to the grantee community. For example, OJP's Grants Management System (GMS) is a fully-automated, web-based, end-to-end paperless grants management system which allows OJP grantees to process and manage their grants effectively and accurately. In order to meet the needs of our grantee community, OJP developed the GMS on-line computer based training tool. Deployed in May 2007, the tool provides grantees with a comprehensive curriculum to assist in managing their awards through GMS. The training provides step-by-step instructions on how to complete various tasks such as modifying the scope of their awards and submitting progress reports. To date, the GMS on-line training tool has had over 100,000 hits.

In FY 2007, we deployed the Grant Closeouts module in GMS. The closeout module ensures that OJP grants are closed out effectively and efficiently and that any remaining funds

are deobligated within 180 days of the grant's end date. This year, GMS was modified to prohibit grantees from drawing down funds after the end of the 90-day closeout period, if the grant has not already been closed.

To encourage OJP grantees to report programmatic progress in a timely fashion, in FY 2007 we implemented the funding freeze functionality within the GMS Progress Report module. The module temporarily freezes payments to an award recipient who fails to submit a timely progress report. After the award recipient submits a progress report and OJP approves it, the GMS module makes the funds available for drawdown. This new GMS feature, which complements the funding freeze for late financial status reports, has led to increased grantee accountability and compliance with grant program reporting requirements.

OJP also is working closely with the Office of Management and Budget and the Grants Management Line of Business (GMLOB) Consortium Service Providers. OJP continues to explore with the Department of Education, one of the GMLOB Consortium Providers, opportunities to partner and collaborate on shared services. We are hopeful that sharing system services will result in cost savings.

OJP Accomplishments

The goal of the grant selection process and monitoring is to ensure that our federal funds are spent wisely and have maximum impact. As you are aware, OJP provides approximately $2 billion annually to the criminal justice community and State, local and tribal law enforcement to help develop the Nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, improve justice systems,

increase knowledge about crime and related issues and assist crime victims. Over the last year,

OJP has experienced many successes and I would like to highlight just a few for the

Subcommittee.

OVC continues to play a critical role in supporting services and rights for crime victims

through its administration of the Crime Victims Fund (CVF). The Fund is supported not by tax

dollars but by fines and penalty assessments collected from convicted federal offenders. This

funding supports lifeline services to hundreds of thousands of crime victims annually though

formula grants to the States and territories for victim assistance and victim compensation.

Currently all States, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico have

established compensation programs for crime victims and provide funding to support State and

local organizations that provide direct services to crime victims. Funds awarded under OVC's

victim compensation formula grant program supplement State efforts to compensate crime

victims. Funding under OVC's victim assistance formula grant program helps States support

direct services to crime victims such as, crisis intervention, emergency shelter, criminal justice

advocacy, emergency transportation, and information and referrals. In FY 2008, OVC awarded

more than $480 million to State crime victim assistance and compensation programs. The States

use their victim assistance funds to award some 5,000 victim assistance grants annually to

domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, child abuse programs, and victim service units in

law enforcement agencies, prosecutors' offices, hospitals, and social service agencies. In FY

2007, States reported providing direct services to over 4,116,600 crime victims using OVC

funds.

To further the goal of long-term organizational capacity building for the victim services field, OVC initiated and administers two innovative programs called Helping Outreach Programs to Expand Grant Programs (HOPE). HOPE I and HOPE II, which are aimed at faith-based and community victim service providers and coalitions. HOPE I was launched in November 2002 after a series of nation-wide roundtable meetings among OVC, crime victims, and victim advocates. OVC became aware of a growing body of grassroots, nonprofit, community- and faith-based victim service organizations and coalitions that were not linked to mainstream victim service programs.

Additionally, since 2002 OVC has administered funding specifically appropriated by Congress to address the scourge of human trafficking within our own borders. Beginning in 2004, OVC has worked closely with BJA to provide grant funding for comprehensive services and legal assistance for these victims and to catalyze the development of anti-human trafficking law enforcement task forces to identify and rescue these victims at the local and State levels, with close involvement of federal law enforcement. In this fiscal year alone, OVC will award over $5 million to support service provision in three new jurisdictions, and to continue services in existing locales. OVC also transferred over $1 million to its Training and Technical Assistance Center in FY08 to support the development and provision of state-of-the-art training and technical assistance to both OVC-fund human trafficking victim service providers and BJA-funded law enforcement task forces. OJP's anti-human trafficking strategy is a complex one, exemplifying the need for victim-centered multi-disciplinary, multi-jurisdictional responses to address this emerging global crime.

In addition to OVC activities, OJJDP awards millions of dollars in formula, block, and discretionary grants that support State and community efforts to prevent and respond to delinquency and child victimization and strengthen the juvenile justice system. One such program is the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force Program. The ICAC program has created a network of State and local law enforcement cyber units that investigate cases of child exploitation. Currently, all 50 states now have at least one ICAC task force and there are 59 ICAC task forces nationwide. The ICAC task forces also work with other law enforcement agencies within their States, so the impact of the program has spread way beyond our grantees.

In June 2008, OJJDP sponsored the National Youth Gang Symposium, which offered innovative and successful gang prevention and intervention programs and strategies and provided the latest information on youth gang activities and trends from top national experts. At the National Youth Gang Symposium, OJJDP released *Best Practices To Address Community Gang Problems: OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model* which provides communities with critical information to guide their gang prevention efforts.

We have enhanced the tools law enforcement officers have to recover missing children. One example of this is the AMBER Alert system. As the National AMBER Alert Coordinator, we expanded our base of partners and continue to work with States and communities to strengthen plans. Today, all 50 states have AMBER Alert plans, and we expanded the network into Indian Country. We partnered with the wireless industry to distribute AMBER Alerts

through voluntary text messages. These accomplishments have assisted in the recovery of over 400 children and we continue to look for ways to improve the system.

OJP's BJA also provides support and funding for law enforcement and criminal justice initiatives nationwide. In FY 2008, BJA administered $466 million through approximately 1,700 grant awards. One of BJA's most significant accomplishments is the Targeting Violent Crime Initiative (TVCI). Through TVCI, BJA administers 106 grants to 103 State, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. Since February 2008, TVCI agencies have reported 5,034 violent felony arrests; 2,751 guns seized; 374 gangs disrupted; and 50 gangs dismantled. The TVCI is designed to create immediate support for jurisdictions suffering increases in violent crime while encouraging adaptation of intelligence-led policing (ILP).

ILP, while a relatively new concept in the United States, was an outcome of British efforts during the late 1990s to manage law enforcement resources efficiently and to respond effectively to serious crime and is an example of how OJP is using research and statistics to inform grant making decisions and assist the criminal justice community. ILP does not replace the previous concepts of problem-solving policing, or community involvement and neighborhood maintenance theories, nor police accountability and information sharing practices. It builds on these concepts to keep pace with changes in society, technology, and criminal behavior. Incorporating research findings and advances in information and communication technology, ILP encourages greater use of criminal intelligence, attends to offenders more than offenses, and offers a more targeted, forward-thinking, multijurisdictional and prevention point of view to the business of policing.

Some BJA ILP-related services, training, demonstration, and technical assistance activities include:

- BJA provides support for six Regional Information Sharing Systems (RISS). RISS provides law enforcement with a crucial, secure venue for intelligence sharing as well as a wide range of training, technical assistance, and equipment activities.

- BJA provides terrorism prevention training and technical assistance to State and local law enforcement agencies through its State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training Program. Services under this program range from individualized briefings to 4-day intelligence/investigation courses.

- Through the Department of Justice Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (Global), BJA offers guidance on a wide range of information sharing policy issues. The *National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan* and the *Privacy Policy Development Guide* are two examples of Global's work that directly support the ILP approach. These documents and others are available at www.it.ojp.gov/global.

- Technology standards, such as the Global Justice XML Data Model, National Information Exchange Model, Justice Reference Architecture, and CAD/RMS Functional Specifications, provide a common vocabulary and framework for the

justice system to share information over a variety of programs. For more information

on BJA's information technology initiatives, visit www.it.ojp.gov.

- In accordance with the *National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan* and the *National Strategy for Information Sharing*, BJA, in partnership with DOJ's Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative, the Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Program Manager for the Information Sharing Environment, and the Major Cities Chiefs Association, has developed recommendations to be used by law enforcement agencies to improve the process of identifying, documenting, and analyzing of suspicious activity reports and the sharing of that information with designated fusion centers.

- The National Criminal Intelligence Resource Center (NCIRC) website, which is sponsored by BJA, contains information regarding law enforcement intelligence operations and practices and provides criminal justice professionals with a centralized resource information bank to access a multitude of criminal intelligence resources. NCIRC is a secure website meant to serve as a "one-stop shop" for local, State, tribal, and federal law enforcement communities to keep up with the latest developments in the field of criminal intelligence

BJA also plays an important role in Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Initiative by administering some funding and training. National PSN training and technical assistance partners have trained nearly 33,000 individuals in over 300 nationally-sponsored training events

across the nation who work to make our communities safer. Local PSN programs have organized training for many thousands more. Overall, the Department has devoted approximately $2 billion to PSN since its inception in 2001.

In 2008, BJA led several PSN Anti-Gang training sessions which provide comprehensive anti-gang prevention, enforcement, and prisoner reentry training for State and local law enforcement and related organizations. Approximately 160 law enforcement officers and criminal justice practitioners attended the pilot training program in September 2007, which was delivered by DOJ law enforcement agencies and other criminal justice professionals. Intervention, prevention, suppression, and reentry strategies were presented, as well as a briefing on national and regional gang trends, a community gang problem assessment, and tips for working with cooperating witnesses and confidential informants. Due to the success of the pilot program and the positive feedback and suggestions received from attendees, 12 Anti-Gang training sessions will be offered throughout 2008 and into 2009 at various locations across the country. To date, DOJ and its federal and national partners have completed Anti-Gang training for 1,851 sworn and non-sworn personnel.

In addition to BJA's activity, BJS plays a critical role in supporting criminal justice programs. For example, BJS plays a critical role in sharing criminal justice information. In 2008, BJS awarded over $8 million to thirty-five jurisdictions to support the National Criminal History Improvement Program (NCHIP). The NCHIP provides grants to States to improve the accuracy, completeness and availability of the Nations' criminal history records which are used for criminal justice and non-criminal justice background checks.

In 2008, BJS made thirteen awards to States totaling almost $3 million for the Stalking and Domestic Violence Record Improvement Program. This program provides grants to States to improve processes for entering criminal justice data regarding stalking and domestic violence into local, State, and national crime information databases.

The work of BJS goes far beyond grants. In 2008, BJS released information on criminal justice topics in more than 15 reports or updates to statistical tables on the website. BJS plans to release an additional 20 topical studies by year-end.

In 2008, BJS also continued to implement the national data collection requirements of the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003. BJS released *Sexual Victimization in Local Jails Reported by Inmates, 2007* and *Sexual Violence Reported by Juvenile Correctional Authorities, 2005-2006*. In 2008, BJS completed a study of mortality in local jails based on seven years of national data collected under the Deaths in Custody Reporting Program, covering over 7,000 inmate's deaths. Findings are expected to be released later this year.

NIJ has also found ways to make a relatively small investment benefit law enforcement agencies nationwide. One example is the National Missing and Unidentified Persons Initiative (NamUs) www.namus.gov, which NIJ launched in 2007. When fully operational in 2009, NamUs will provide a powerful tool for law enforcement, medical examiners and coroners, victim advocates—and the general public—to search for matches between missing persons and unidentified human remains records. NamUs is the first National online repository for missing

persons and unidentified dead cases. It will also provide central access to information from other Web sites, State clearinghouses, and other important resources.

In June 2008, NIJ released the results of a five-city field study that looked at the efficacy of performing DNA analysis on biological evidence collected from property crime scenes. The DNA Field Experiment was a collaboration between NIJ and local law enforcement agencies—police, crime labs and prosecutors—in five communities. The study found that when DNA evidence was collected at property crime scenes suspect identifications and arrests doubled. Further, the study found that DNA arrestees had double the number of prior arrests and double the prior convictions as those arrested through traditional investigations.

In August 2008, NIJ awarded five grants under the Postconviction DNA Testing Assistance Program. The States receiving funding are Arizona, Kentucky, Texas, Virginia, and Washington. However, we are looking for the impact to go beyond these five states, as exonerating the innocent is a key component of the President's DNA Initiative. NIJ has undertaken several new initiatives to increase understanding of and to assist States in obtaining the resources they need to address postconviction issues. These include a rigorous review of the exonerations of the wrongly convicted to better understand how eyewitness testimony, false confessions, forensic science, investigative practices and other issues relate to wrongful convictions; a workshop for law enforcement, prosecutors and defense attorneys, crime laboratories and innocence-project advocates to help states understand how to apply for post-conviction DNA funding; and an evaluation of post-conviction programs in two states to develop "best practices" and assist in efficient post-conviction reviews and DNA analysis.

In June 2008, NIJ released an interim report from a blue-ribbon panel convened to study in-custody deaths reported to be connected to the use of a conduced energy device (CED), such as, but not limited, to the TASER®. In the report – *Study of Deaths following Electro Muscular Disruption Interim Report* – the panel found that while the use of a CED is not risk free, there is no conclusive medical evidence that indicates a high risk of serious injury or death from their direct effects. Consequently law enforcement agencies should not refrain from using CED's, so long as they are used in accordance with accepted national guidelines.

In July 2008, NIJ released a new performance standard for body armor, which includes more rigorous testing and methods that expose body armor to temperature, humidity, and wear and tear, prior to testing the performance. Performance standards ensure that commercially available body armor, such as bullet resistant vests, provide a minimum level of protection. NIJ has published standards for both ballistic and stab resistance of personal body armor for law enforcement and corrections officers. The new standard is a major component in the Department's 2003 Body Armor Safety Initiative, established in response to concerns from the law enforcement community about the effectiveness of body armor then in use.

CCDO is another OJP component that helps States and local communities make the most out of limited resources. CCDO's strategic three-pronged approach is comprised of direct grant assistance, training and technical assistance, and program development through promotion of partnerships and best practices. This approach provides a broad return on investment of federal dollars that is unlike any other federal criminal justice program.

CCDO's flagship program, the Weed and Seed initiative, is a community-based, comprehensive multi-agency approach to public safety. There are currently 320 neighborhoods across the country where Weed and Seed is being implemented. The Weed and Seed strategy brings together federal, State, and local crime-fighting agencies, social service providers, representatives of the public and private sectors, prosecutors, business owners and neighborhood residents under the shared goal of weeding out violent crime and/or gang activity while seeding in social services and economic revitalization. During FY 2008, $28 million dollars for new Weed and Seed sites will be awarded.

In addition to providing direct funding for sites, CCDO also formally designates Graduated Sites through an annual certification program. Now in its third year, there are currently 88 certified graduated sites across 25 states and the Virgin Islands. Forty-six of these communities were newly certified during FY 2008. Graduated status is awarded to Weed and Seed communities that wish to continue implementing their Weed and Seed strategy through self-sustaining efforts. Although the sites no longer receive funds from CCDO, they maintain their official affiliation with CCDO and receive advanced training and technical assistance. In exchange, sites agree to continue reporting on their activities and outcomes. This data provides CCDO with a rich source of information regarding program performance and successes beyond the federal funding cycle.

Finally, OJP's newest office, the SMART Office, recently established the Support for Adam Walsh Act Implementation Grant Program in FY 2007 to assist communities in developing and/or enhancing programs designed to implement the requirements of the Sex

Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA) which is Title I of the Adam Walsh Act. In FY 2007, the SMART Office awarded more than $11 million to support various projects across the United States. In FY 2008, the SMART Office will provide more than $4 million in direct grant assistance to further these efforts along with continued support through training and technical assistance.

Also in FY 2007, the SMART Office helped develop several web-based software resources to assist jurisdictions in implementing the registry requirements of SORNA. These resources were made available to jurisdictions in July 2008 and include the National Sex Offender Public Registry Exchange Site; mapping and geo-coding in which jurisdictions will have free services that will allow them to geo-code addresses to enable SORNA-required geographic radius searches for sex offenders; a Community E-mail Notification System; E-mail Address Search System; and templates which tribes and federal territories can use to create a unique tribe/territory-specific sex offender registry web site.

On July 1, 2008, the Attorney General released the final guidelines for SORNA. These guidelines provide direction and assistance for jurisdictions in their efforts to meet the minimum standards of the SORNA. The guidelines detail who must register as sex offenders, how long they must register, the type of information they must disclose, how frequently and under what circumstances they must update that information and how these requirements should be enforced.

Conclusion

Through these and other efforts, Mr. Chairman, OJP is working to ensure the effective use of grant funds, prevent fraud and abuse and measure the impact of the programs we fund. This concludes my statement, Mr. Chairman. I would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions you or Members of the Subcommittee may have.