

STATEMENT OF
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OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

BEFORE THE
UNITED STATES SENATE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am very pleased to be here today, and very honored to have been nominated to this important position in the U.S. Department of Justice. Before proceeding, I would like to introduce my husband, Sheldon Krantz, and my son, Ted Baab, who are here with me.

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Statistical reports tell us that crime has stabilized on a national level, but we still know that many cities, as well as rural and tribal communities in this country, experience problems with gangs, drugs, and violence. And newer challenges – like internet crimes against children and identity theft – confront state and local law enforcement officials, even as they struggle with limited resources.

Over the past three decades, I have had the chance to work with professionals throughout the criminal and juvenile justice system – prosecutors, law enforcement, judges, corrections officials, victim advocates, and tribal leaders. They want to know what Washington can do to help address crime.

From my past experience in the Justice Department, I learned many things – including the fact that the federal government can be an *effective partner* with states, localities, and citizens – if we approach the task in a pragmatic and problem-solving fashion.

Few cutting edge innovations are invented in Washington. The best ideas in public safety – like crime mapping, drug courts, and CompStat – come

from pioneers at the local level. So it is imperative that we get outside the Beltway and talk to front-line practitioners.

Many people ask why I would be willing to come back to head the Justice Department's Office of Justice Programs, if confirmed. The answer is two-fold.

First, the challenges facing criminal justice in this country are clearly different now than they were when I left nine years ago. The greatest change, of course, is that we are now in a post-September 11th environment; local police chiefs and sheriffs must not only address crime, but also be vigilant about terrorism. At the same time, jurisdictions are struggling to deal with these challenges with more limited budgets.

But the second reason that draws me back is that the field has grown more sophisticated in dealing with crime – and that gives me optimism. There is much greater understanding of evidence-based approaches – for example, using risk assessment in deciding what offenders can be safely released on parole, and the adoption of “hot spots” policing – how to effectively target patrols to make the best use of resources.

It is critical that taxpayer dollars fund programs that really work, and that we aggressively share with the field distilled information about new research. Busy policymakers and police chiefs have no time to read academic journals. So one of my goals, if confirmed, would be to establish a “What Works” Clearinghouse to get information in summarized form out to the field.

One more point that I would like to underscore: Particularly with passage of the Recovery Act, OJP is responsible now for *billions* of dollars in

grant funds and the oversight and monitoring of *thousands* of grants. It is imperative that there be a system of internal controls and strong accountability to guard against waste, fraud and abuse. Building on my prior experience, this will be one of my highest priorities if confirmed, working closely with the Justice Department's Office of Inspector General.

To conclude, it is clear we face a host of challenges in addressing public safety in this country. Even though criminal justice in the United States is largely a state and local enterprise, the federal government has a key leadership role to play. There is a real opportunity to build innovative partnerships that can meet the greater crime challenges we face today – and will likely confront in the years to come. But I look forward to those challenges and will, if confirmed, welcome the opportunity to address them.

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Mr. Chairman, that concludes my statement. I am happy to answer any questions you or the Members may have.