



Office of the San Diego City Attorney

Mara W. Elliott  
City Attorney

April 23, 2021

Rep. Matt Cartwright, Chairman  
Commerce, Justice, & Science  
House Appropriations Subcommittee  
H-310 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

*Re: Funding for Family Justice Centers in Fiscal Year 2022 – Support*

Dear Chairman Cartwright:

The San Diego City Attorney's Office urges you and the members of the Commerce, Justice, and Science Subcommittee to protect and support victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and sex trafficking by including report language that supports robust funding for Family Justice Centers in the coming Fiscal Year.

The national model for Family Justice Centers was launched nearly twenty years ago here in San Diego. As City Attorney, I have made expanding services at the San Diego Family Justice Center (SDFJC) a priority, ensuring that every survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, and sex trafficking can receive confidential, judgment-free, and victim-centered services. The SDFJC embraces every survivor regardless of their sexual identity or immigration status.

The SDFJC is a safe harbor where thousands of victims come to obtain no-cost services – everything from forensic medical exams to help securing restraining orders to personalized wardrobes and other basic needs. Our hardworking team of dedicated staff and community partners has stepped up to ensure SDFJC services remain steadfast despite the challenges of the pandemic. We've adapted SDFJC operations to continue serving victims safely -- offering, for example, emergency hotel vouchers, grocery gift cards, virtual counseling, and online enrichment programs for children.

COVID has ravaged our communities, keeping victims of violence isolated with their abusers and creating often insurmountable economic challenges for families. Municipal budgets, on which many Family Justice Centers rely, have adapted to the urgent priorities created by the pandemic, often at the expense of traditional programs. Now is the time to shore up funding for the critical work that Family Justice Centers do throughout the nation.

Rep. Matt Cartwright, Chairman

April 23, 2021

Page 2

We respectfully urge the Subcommittee to include report language asking the Department of Justice to provide robust funding to Family Justice Centers in the upcoming Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations bill, from the amount made available for the Improving the Criminal Justice Response as authorized by Part U of the 1968 Act.

Sincerely,



Mara W. Elliott