

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 (as amended in 2018 through the Juvenile Justice Reform Act)

34 U.S.C. 11101 SEC. 101: Findings

TITLE I—FINDINGS AND DECLARATION OF PURPOSE

(a) The Congress finds the following:

(1) Although the juvenile violent crime arrest rate in 1999 was the lowest in the decade, there remains a consensus that the number of crimes and the rate of offending by juveniles nationwide is still too high.

(2) According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, allowing 1 youth to leave school for a life of crime and of drug abuse costs society \$1,700,000 to \$2,300,000 annually.

(3) One in every 6 individuals (16.2 percent) arrested for committing violent crime in 1999 was less than 18 years of age. In 1999, juveniles accounted for 9 percent of murder arrests, 17 percent of forcible rape arrests, 25 percent of robbery arrest, 14 percent of aggravated assault arrests, and 24 percent of weapons arrests.

(4) More than ½ of juvenile murder victims are killed with firearms. Of the nearly 1,800 murder victims less than 18 years of age, 17 percent of the victims less than 13 years of age were murdered with a firearm, and 81 percent of the victims 13 years of age or older were killed with a firearm.

(5) Juveniles accounted for 13 percent of all drug abuse violation arrests in 1999.

Between 1990 and 1999, juvenile arrests for drug abuse violations rose 132 percent.

(6) Over the last 3 decades, youth gang problems have increased nationwide. In the 1970's, 19 States reported youth gang problems. By the late 1990's, all 50 States and the District of Columbia reported gang problems. For the same period, the number of cities reporting youth gang problems grew 843 percent, and the number of counties reporting gang problems increased more than 1,000 percent.

(7) According to a national crime survey of individuals 12 years of age or older during 1999, those 12 to 19 years old are victims of violent crime at higher rates than individuals in all other age 2 groups. Only 30.8 percent of these violent victimizations were reported by youth to police in 1999.

(8) One-fifth of juveniles 16 years of age who had been arrested were first arrested before attaining 12 years of age. Juveniles who are known to the juvenile justice system before attaining 13 years of age are responsible for a disproportionate share of serious crimes and violence.

(9) The increase in the arrest rates for girls and young juvenile offenders has changed the composition of violent offenders entering the juvenile justice system.

(10) These problems should be addressed through a 2-track common sense approach that addresses the needs of individual juveniles and society at large by promoting--

(A) quality prevention programs that--

(i) work with juveniles, their families, local public agencies, and community-based organizations, and take into consideration such factors as whether or not juveniles have been the victims of family violence (including child abuse and neglect); and

(ii) are designed to reduce risks and develop competencies in at-risk juveniles that will prevent, and reduce the rate of, violent delinquent behavior; and
(B) programs that assist in holding juveniles accountable for their actions and in developing the competencies necessary to become responsible and productive members of their communities, including a system of graduated sanctions to respond to each delinquent act, requiring juveniles to make restitution, or perform community service, for the damage caused by their delinquent acts, and methods for increasing victim satisfaction with respect to the penalties imposed on juveniles for their acts.
(11) Coordinated juvenile justice and delinquency prevention projects that meet the needs of juveniles through the collaboration of the many local service systems juveniles encounter can help prevent juveniles from becoming delinquent and help delinquent youth return to a productive life.
(b) Congress must act now to reform this program by focusing on juvenile delinquency prevention programs, as well as programs that hold juveniles accountable for their acts and which provide opportunities for competency development. Without true reform, the juvenile justice system will not be able to overcome the challenges it will face in the coming years when the number of juveniles is expected to increase by 18 percent between 2000 and 2030.

34 U.S.C. 11102 SEC. 102: Purposes

The purposes of this title and title II are-

- (1) to support State, tribal, and local programs that prevent juvenile involvement in delinquent behavior;
- (2) to assist State, tribal, and local governments in promoting public safety by encouraging accountability for acts of juvenile delinquency; and
- (3) to assist State, tribal, and local governments in addressing juvenile crime through the provision of technical assistance, research, training, evaluation, and the dissemination of current and relevant information on effective and evidence-based programs for combating juvenile delinquency; and
- (4) to support a continuum of evidence-based or promising programs (including delinquency prevention, intervention, mental health, behavioral health and substance abuse treatment, family services, and services for children exposed to violence) that are trauma informed, reflect the science of adolescent development, and are designed to meet the needs of at-risk youth and youth who come into contact with the justice system.

34 U.S.C. 11111 SEC 201: Establishment of office

TITLE II PART A JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION OFFICE

(a) There is hereby established an Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (hereinafter in this division referred to as the “Office”) within the Department of Justice under the general authority of the Attorney General. (b) The Office shall be headed by an

Administrator (hereinafter in this title referred to as the “Administrator”) appointed by the President from among individuals who have had experience in juvenile justice programs. The Administrator is authorized to prescribe regulations consistent with this Act to award, administer, modify, extend, terminate, monitor, evaluate, reject, or deny all grants and contracts from, and applications for, funds made available under this title. The Administrator shall have the same reporting relationship with the Attorney General as the directors of other offices and bureaus within the Office of Justice Programs have. (c) There shall be in the Office a Deputy Administrator who shall be appointed by the Attorney General. The Deputy Administrator shall perform such functions as the Administrator may from time to time assign or delegate and shall act as the Administrator during the absence or disability of the Administrator.