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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025
<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

May 15, 2020

The Honorable William P. Barr
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Barr,

I write to express my concerns over the delay in a critical status report regarding data collection of police suicide directed by the Committee as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116-93). As there is no comprehensive national data collection regarding police suicides, the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) was directed to maintain a data set and report on police suicides for Federal, State, and local law enforcement in order to better understand the full scope of this issue and determine death rates and other trends in order to inform law enforcement agencies, lawmakers and the public on how to prevent, intervene and improve responses to suicide. A status report to the Committee on how BJS planned to accomplish this data collection was requested within 90 days of enactment of Public Law 116-93, which was March 19, 2020, yet this report still has not been submitted.

The coronavirus pandemic has only increased stress and uncertainty for law enforcement officers who have experienced increased calls for assistance, possible job loss and the deaths of loved ones and colleagues to COVID-19. The time is past due for a data collection by BJS on law enforcement suicide. The Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Subcommittee is also working on our Fiscal Year 2021 bill and we need this information to determine any resource needs required by BJS to conduct this important collection.

I look forward to expeditiously receiving this report. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
Vice Chair
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies