



November 10, 2009

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Leahy and Sessions:

I am writing to offer my highest support for the nomination of James P. Lynch for the position of Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics in the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) is a small but absolutely critical agency charged with developing, gathering, and maintaining the Nation's statistics on crime and justice. The Director of the agency must be someone who is highly skilled, knowledgeable about the value of crime and justice statistics, and committed to the principals and practices of a federal statistical agency as stated by the National Research Council. Dr. Lynch possesses all of these qualities and more. He is also widely respected by his peers, as evidenced by his elections to various offices of the American Society of Criminology, his prestigious academic appointments, and his position as editor of the Journal of Quantitative Criminology. He has also served on the American Statistical Association advisory committee to BJS and as a research fellow to the agency. There is no other criminologist who possesses this range of expertise and experience with crime and justice statistics.

I have known Dr. Lynch for many years, most recently through our service on the National Academy of Sciences Committee on National Statistics, which was charged with assessing the full range of statistical programs at BJS. It was evident throughout our numerous meetings that Dr. Lynch is the preeminent expert on the data collections of BJS, and that he has a clear and objective eye for assessing the quality and usefulness of these statistical systems. I believe he will be dedicated servant to both the public and to government officials who depend on unbiased data for informing policy decisions about crime and justice in the United States.

I believe that the Nation would be fortunate to have Dr. Lynch serve as Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics and I very strongly urge the Senate to confirm his nomination.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Janet Lauritsen'.

Janet L. Lauritsen
Professor

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Criminology & Criminal Justice Policy Coalition



The Honorable Patrick Leahy
433 Russell Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
335 Russell Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

November 12, 2009

Dear Senators Leahy and Sessions:

On behalf of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Policy Coalition, a partnership between the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences and the American Society of Criminology, we write to urge your support for the nomination of Dr. James P. Lynch to serve as the next Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) at the Department of Justice. We hope that the Senate Judiciary Committee will move swiftly in confirming his nomination.

We believe Dr. Lynch is an outstanding candidate, who will bring with him experience in survey design, an understanding of criminal justice issues broadly, and a working understanding of the Bureau and its needs. Dr. Lynch currently serves as a Distinguished Professor at John Jay College in New York. He spent the previous nineteen years as a faculty member in the Department of Justice, Law and Society (JLS) at American University, ultimately serving as chair of the department before joining John Jay in 2005. Over the course of his career, he has been elected to serve on the Executive Board of the *American Society of Criminology*, the editorial boards of *Criminology* and the *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, and as Deputy Editor of *Justice Quarterly*.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating data on crime, criminal offenders, and victims of crime. The information that the Bureau collects is critical to Federal, State, and local policymakers, and plays a key role in developing effective responses to combating crime. BJS conducts the National Crime Victimization Survey, and is our nation's source for demographic statistics about all aspects of the justice system: including the processing of people accused of crime, the management and administration of justice, and even some aspects of the impact of the justice system on families and communities. Reports

from BJS are relied upon to compare states' sentencing practices, learn about the fast-evolving drug problem in the nation, measure correctional growth and costs, and estimate cost-savings of alternative criminal justice strategies. There is no other source for data and reports such as these, and the independence of this office makes its findings of inestimable importance for planning and evaluation of criminal justice policies and practices.

Experience has shown that for a successful Director, BJS requires a person knowledgeable in the scientific aspects of demography, the mechanical particulars of gathering and preparing survey data for public use, and the protocols for scientifically acceptable sampling and statistical estimation. The nation can ill afford weak leadership of this crucial source for data on which policy makers and scientists alike rely. Dr. Lynch's years of experience as a researcher and leader in our field have prepared him to excel in this role. In 1980 he joined the Bureau of Social Science Research and over the next six years served as the manager of the National Crime Survey Redesign. He has also chaired the American Statistical Association's Committee on Law and Justice Statistics, and served as a member of the National Academies of Science panel reviewing BJS programs. We are confident that Dr. Lynch will bring to this position his sophisticated understanding of survey research and design, and his knowledge of the application of public justice data to criminal justice planning and management.

Our organizations, the American Society of Criminology and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, represent criminologists, researchers, and practitioners in the fields of criminology, prevention and treatment of crime and delinquency, and criminal justice. On behalf of our more than 6,000 members, we urge you to support the nomination of Dr. Lynch to serve as the next Director of BJS.

Sincerely yours,



Richard Rosenfeld
President, 2009-2010
American Society of Criminology
Curators Professor
Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice
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Janice Joseph
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