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CRIMINAL JUSTICE
INFORMATION AUTHORITY

300 W. Adams Street • Suite 200 • Chicago, Illinois 60606 • (312) 793-8550

Memorandum

To: **Authority Board Members**

From: **Jack Cutrone**

Date: **August 31, 2012**

Re: **Neighborhood Recovery Initiative Designation for Authority Board meeting**

As you are aware, the General Assembly appropriated $20 million to ICJIA for grants to community organizations. That funding had previously been allocated to the Illinois Violence Prevention Authority (IVPA) for Governor Quinn's Neighborhood Recovery Initiative (NRI)., At the request of the Governor, the NRI funding provided services and jobs for 23 communities in the Chicago area which exhibit high levels of violent crime, poverty, unemployment, low educational achievement and social disorder. The currently funded programs expire October 31, 2012. The Governor has expressed a strong desire that the new ICJIA funding be used to continue the good work done by IVPA. ICJIA staff has made NRI ICJIA's number one priority, utilizing enormous staff resources to the project over the past three months. However, even with those efforts, ICJIA is on an extremely tight timeline to assure continued funding without interruption of much needed community based services and employment. Therefore, ICJIA is requesting the Authority Board's assistance to continue funding the NRI programs

The program as implemented by IVPA had four component parts in each community, a mentoring plus jobs program, a parent leadership program, re-entry services for young people returning to the community from the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Corrections, and a school-based counseling program which was an expansion of existing Chicago Public School programming in the Chicago communities part of NRI. During the first year and second partial year of the program, 9592 individuals received services as a result of the program, 4474 individuals received jobs through their participation in the program (not including administrative staff or counseling staff jobs also created) and participants received a total of 542,918 service hours which includes 480,513 hours of employment through NRI. Thus, NRI has been extremely successful in providing much needed jobs and services to some of the Chicago area's most distressed communities and some of the individuals most at risk for criminal behavior.

As part of the budget committee materials for the September quarterly meeting, ICJIA has included a spreadsheet indicating the budgeted funding levels for each of the communities for the

two years the initiative has been in operation. The materials also include an interim report compiled by Dr. Marc Atkins of the University of Illinois, Chicago who has been contracted to provide an evaluation of the program. The report shows the number of people served in all the components of NRI in all 23 communities, the number of people who were employed as participants in the program, and the number of service hours provided to, or by participants, among other data.

For state fiscal year 2013, the administration requested approximately $36 million to maintain all components of the program in all 23 communities. Due to fiscal constraints, the General Assembly cut that funding approximately in half. Of this year's appropriation to ICJIA, $5 million was an earmark appropriation for a grant to the Chicago Area Project without restriction as to its use, and the balance of $15 million was for grants to community organizations specifically for violence prevention programs. Fortunately, the Chicago Area Project has graciously agreed to use $2.5 million of its earmarked appropriation to continue their participation in NRI although they were not obligated to do so. In light of the reduced funding, we are constrained by fiscal realities to make some extremely difficult choices regarding cuts to the program, either by restricting geographic areas to be served, restricting NRI components to be continued in whole or in particular areas, and the possible elimination of underperforming service providers. ICJIA has been working closely with the Governor's office, in particular, the Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff for Public Safety, Dr. Toni Irving, to try to make NRI as effective as possible at the reduced funding level. All together there are approximately 200 existing NRI grantees or subgrantees providing one or more of the component NRI programs, so the task is exceedingly complex, and while we are close, these determinations have not been finalized to date. As you will also recall, at the last Budget Committee meeting, $1.7 million was designated for the Governor's Summer Jobs for Youth Program.

Under ICJIA's normal grant process, ICJIA staff makes recommendations to the Budget Committee and the full Authority Board, and once those recommendations are designated for grants, we send notice to the grantee of the designation, a draft grant contract, a form for program narrative, containing performance measures for the program, as well as a form budget. After receiving approval from the Authority Board, a lengthy negotiation process begins, wherein ICJIA's grant monitors work closely with grantee staff to ensure that the grant contract, program narrative and budget are in proper form with appropriate budgeted expenditures, and appropriate performance measures. This can be a very lengthy process even for sophisticated governmental grantees, but it is anticipated that the process will be lengthened in dealing with NRI grantees which are community organizations, some relatively unsophisticated, and which will be required to adhere to ICJIA's high standards for grant monitoring.

In some instances, most notably in some of our victim service grants, and in some of our grants to law enforcement agencies, particularly for equipment purchases, ICJIA staff has presented an overall plan to the Budget Committee and the Authority Board laying out the basic structure of the grant, but requesting permission to be allowed discretion as to the particulars of its implementation. Thus, ICJIA staff is presenting the materials as to the first two years of the NRI program and its overall structure, and are requesting the approval of a grant designation for NRI which will be in keeping with the NRI program as it has been implemented to date to allow the program as a whole to continue with authority to ICJIA staff working under the direction of the

Governor's office to make necessary adjustments to meet fiscal restraints due to the severely reduced funding. ICJIA staff will report back at the next meeting of the Budget Committee and of the Authority Board as to the particulars of the grants which were so made. We are therefore requesting a designation of the remaining $13.3 million to continue the program and a further designation of $5 million to the Chicago Area Project.