December 11, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510  

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515  

Re: Support for Reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Minority Leader Pelosi:

I write on behalf of the American Bar Association (ABA) to urge swift, final action to reauthorize the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act (JJDPA) of 2018. This legislation had been approved in substantially similar forms by unanimous vote in the House (H.R. 6964) and by voice vote in the Senate (S. 860). We appreciate the complexity of ongoing negotiations around the final bill. However, we urge you to take the opportunity now to reconcile the remaining differences and finally pass this important reauthorization act in both chambers so that it may be signed into law this Congress.

States and localities are depending on the vital funding, research, and technical assistance that JJDPA makes available. Both House and Senate versions of JJDPA reauthorization continue to support important protective provisions for youth, as well as a national commitment to the rehabilitative purpose of the juvenile justice system – things we all can get behind. While the proposed compromise legislation does not satisfy all juvenile justice reforms advocated by the ABA, we still think this is a critical step in the right direction.

I appreciate your consideration of these comments. If the ABA can provide any assistance, please contact Ken Goldsmith in the ABA’s Governmental Affairs Office at 202-662-1789 or kenneth.goldsmith@americanbar.org.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Carlson