

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 17, 2017

The Honorable Jeff Sessions  
Attorney General  
United States Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Sessions,

We are writing to you to express our support for the Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination (“BRAVE”) initiative which has demonstrable and proven results for reducing crime in the Baton Rouge community, and we urge your department to grant an extension of the current September 17, 2017 deadline for expending these funds. The funding through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has provided much needed resources for the Baton Rouge community to see the successes currently recognized by the program.

Since 2012, BRAVE has been a collaborate effort, bringing together members of law enforcement with community and faith organizations to implement a model grounded in research and best practices. The program has focused on the root causes of separating youths from violent behaviors and group activity through coordinated outreach. The results of this partnership and research have resulted in a significant drop in crime with a 25% reduction of homicides, violent crime, and juvenile crime. This program has enabled law enforcement to conduct outreach to over 200 young group members from over forty violent groups and resulting in fifty-two individual requests for assistance, which is considered a national best response rate. A partnership with Louisiana State University has also furthered these efforts by providing valuable data tracking and analysis.

Because BRAVE has proven successes, we ask that law enforcement and the community be given additional time to expend these dollars and continue this work. They have invested a significant amount of time, research, and coordination to ensure these dollars are being wisely and effectively spent. Additionally, law enforcement and the entire community have spent the better part of the last ten months first dealing with riots and the shooting of six law enforcement officers in July then followed by the nation’s fourth most costly flood a month later. Throughout this time, the community remains committed to carrying out the mission of the BRAVE program but we are asking that you recognize the need for more time to do so in light of these extraordinary circumstances.

We appreciate your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,



Garret Graves  
Member of Congress



Cedric Richmond  
Member of Congress