

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Aryeh Neier  
**FROM:** Diana Morris and Raquiba LaBrie  
**DATE:** July 8, 2011  
**RE:** Out-of-Docket Recommendation for the National Council of La Raza

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Attached for your approval is an Equality and Opportunity Fund grant recommendation for the National Council of La Raza (NCLR). NCLR seeks project support to respond to recent cuts in federal funding for housing counseling programs and will be used to support a coalition of three national intermediary groups who have been at forefront of building a housing counseling infrastructure that serves the credit needs of communities of color: NCLR, the National Coalition for Asian Pacific American Community Development (another EOF grantee), and the National Urban League. If approved, we expect our \$500,000 grant to leverage an additional \$2,600,000 from other philanthropic and corporate institutions to sustain local housing counseling organizations affiliated with these national intermediaries. In addition, the funds will be used to build the advocacy capacity of local housing counseling groups to help restore federal funding and deepen relationships with financial institutions over the long-term.

We are happy to discuss this recommendation at your convenience.

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Aryeh Neier  
**FROM:** Raquiba LaBrie  
**DATE:** August 1, 2011  
**RE:** Out-of-Docket Recommendation for CASA de Maryland

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Attached for your approval is an Equality and Opportunity Fund grant recommendation for CASA de Maryland, Inc. (CASA). CASA requests a \$40,000 project support grant to mount a legal challenge to petition signatures gathered to certify a referendum to defeat Maryland SB 167, popularly known as the Maryland DREAM Act. Ordinarily this request would be submitted to Diana Morris because it is for less than \$50,000. Diana, however, has a conflict of interest; her husband is a member of the Board of Directors of CASA.

I would be happy to discuss this recommendation at your convenience.

# Memo

To: Aryeh Neier

From: Diana Morris, Leonard Noisette and Criminal Justice Fund Staff

Date: 20 June 2011

Re: Criminal Justice Fund Docket II Grant Recommendations

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The Criminal Justice Fund recommends fourteen grants for U.S. Programs' Docket II, scheduled for June 27, 2011, totaling \$4,840,000.<sup>1</sup> These grants, which include twelve renewals, represent continued support for work across our three core goals of Reducing Mass Incarceration, Eliminating Harsh Punishment, and Eliminating Racial Disparities and Securing a Fair System of Justice.

We recommend three grants that advance the Criminal Justice Fund's interest in reducing mass incarceration. The grant to **Council of State Governments** will support its work at the state level to help criminal justice administrators and policy makers identify changes in practice that will reduce incarceration and free resources for community reinvestment. Support for the **Vera Institute of Justice** will allow it to work in targeted jurisdictions to support multi-agency government collaboration to reduce unnecessary incarceration by enhancing the fair administration of justice and the cost-effectiveness of local justice systems. The proposed grant to **Ella Baker Center** will allow it to continue to engage local community members in promoting alternatives to incarceration and community safety through its solution based approaches to dealing with community violence and promoting safe and healthy neighborhoods.

Six of our proposed grants support multiple priorities related to our goal of eliminating harsh punishment. A grant to the **Osborne Association** will advance our interest in removing barriers to and expanding opportunities for the civic participation of people with criminal records, by strengthening contact and relationships between incarcerated parents and their children. Two grants, to **Texas Defender Service** and the **Death Penalty Mobilization State Strategies Fund/Tides Foundation**, further the goals of the national Campaign to Abolish the Death Penalty by 2025 by supporting strategic litigation aimed at reducing death sentences and executions and by helping to improve the infrastructure of state-based organizations targeting death penalty repeal efforts.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Of this total, \$4,575,000 would come from CJF funds, with one grant co-funded with \$40,000 from the Equality and Opportunity Fund and \$25,000 from the Campaign from Black Male Achievement, and a second grant co-funded with \$200,000 from the National Security and Human Rights Campaign. And Opportunity Fund and \$25,000 from the Campaign for Black Male Achievement, and a second grant co-funded with \$200,000 from the national Security and Human Rights Campaign.

<sup>2</sup> .We also recommend an additional grant to **Rockwood Leadership Institute**, for \$120,000 in project support over one year ,to provide comprehensive leadership development training opportunities to advocates working to abolish the death penalty in United States. This recommendation is consolidated with a proposed renewal of general support funding from the Democracy and Power Fund, and is included in its docket.

Three grants advance CJF's interest in eliminating the criminalization of children, especially children of color and poor youth. Renewed general support to the **Juvenile Law Center** advances our goal of supporting statewide reform opportunities through policy advocacy and strategic litigation. First time project support funding to the **Coalition for Juvenile Justice/National Juvenile Justice Network** advances CJF's interest in strengthening the capacity of advocates to seize opportunities for reform presented by their state's fiscal crisis. Also, first time project support to **Youth United for Change**, in partnership with EOF, supports CJF's goal of dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline by challenging educational policies and practices that decrease educational opportunities for children and increase their involvement in the justice system

Five grants support our goal of eliminating racial disparities and securing a fair system of justice. General support grants, to **Texas Fair Defense Project**, **New York State Defenders Association**, the **Foundation for Criminal Justice/National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers** and the **National Juvenile Defender Center**, support activities designed to enforce the constitutional right to counsel on a statewide or national level through systemic litigation, policy advocacy, and the training and resourcing of the defender community. One tie-off project grant to **Seattle University/The Defender Initiative** supports activities that promote the implementation of the right to counsel through individual court advocacy and writings designed to raise public awareness of the crisis in indigent defense and the need for greater use of alternatives to incarceration.

These grants also reflect CJF's continued support of a range of strategies to promote reform. We are pleased with our mix of support for grantees working nationally (Vera, Council of State Governments, Juvenile Law Center, Foundation for Criminal Justice, National Juvenile Defender Center) and others working primarily at the state or local level (Ella Baker Center, Osborne Association, Youth United for Change, Texas Defender Service, Texas Fair Defense Project, New York State Defenders Association). Both national and state-based grantees are engaged in activities that seek to take advantage of opportunities for reform presented by the current fiscal crisis.

The proposed grants also contain support for both technical assistance and evidenced based research and policy (Council for State Governments, Vera), and grassroots advocacy (Ella Baker Center, Youth United for Change, Osborne, Death Penalty State Mobilization Fund). We continue to support litigation to advance systemic reform (Texas, Defender Service, Texas Fair Defense Project, Juvenile Law Center) as well as direct services that inform policy change efforts (Osborne, Juvenile law Center, Texas Defender Service).

Finally, our two new recommended grants reflect our desire to make strategic, time-sensitive investments. Project support funding to the Coalition for Juvenile Justice /NJN will better prepare advocates to take advantage of the fiscal crisis in the states to push for reform of juvenile justice systems. Support for Youth United for Change is an opportunity to help the group build its capacity to challenge excessive disciplinary practices, particularly the presence and role of police in schools, at a critical time in the development of the advocacy campaign in Philadelphia, a city CJF is watching related to its developing police accountability work.

## **REDUCING MASS INCARCERATION**

**Council of State Governments (CSG)**, TBD \$500,000 project grant renewal over two years to continue coordinating the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, which works to strengthen public safety by reducing spending on corrections and expanding investments in improving conditions in high incarceration neighborhoods for people returning from prison. Renewed OSF funding would enable CSG to continue providing non-partisan research, technical assistance, and education to policymakers and advocacy organizations to support the development of strategies, policies, and programs that enable states to reduce prison, parole, and probation populations and reinvest saved corrections resources (human and financial) to support and enhance successful reentry through strengthened community infrastructure and institutions.

**Vera Institute of Justice (Vera)**, \$500,000 project grant renewal to conduct research and demonstration projects, provide technical assistance to local government and community leaders, and use cost-benefit analysis to improve criminal and juvenile justice policymaking and planning. OSF funding would support the efforts of Vera's: Center on Sentencing and Corrections, which advances criminal justice policies that promote fairness, protect public safety, and ensure the efficient use of public resources; Center for Youth Justice, which reduces bias in juvenile justice systems, expands the use of community-based services, and diverts young people who will be better served by other agencies; and its Cost Benefit Analysis Program, which helps policymakers and practitioners identify cost-effective criminal and juvenile justice interventions by providing them information about the costs and benefits of program and policy options.

**Ella Baker Center for Human Rights (EBC)**, \$300,000 general support grant renewal over two years. EBC is an Oakland-based public charity whose mission is to promote a human investment agenda that offers positive alternatives to violence and incarceration and builds "people power" in communities most directly affected by mass incarceration and harsh punishment. The organization's projects include: *Books Not Bars*, which develops alternatives to youth incarceration and promotes closing youth prisons in California; the *Green Collar Jobs Campaign*, which creates job opportunities for low income communities and communities of color by engaging diverse stakeholders to launch training programs, align green employers, and advocate for public policies that promote clean energy, green business, and green jobs training; and the *California Partnership*, through which it works in coalition with the other advocacy groups to reduce the number of people incarcerated in California's prison system.

## **ELIMINATING HARSH PUNISHMENT**

### **Challenging Barriers to and Promoting Opportunities for Reentry**

**Osborne Association (Osborne)**, \$200,000 project support grant renewal over two years to support the *Children of Incarcerated Parents Initiative*, a collaborative system reform and advocacy effort that brings together public and private agencies and individuals concerned about how the arrest and incarceration of parents affect children. OSF funding would enable Osborne to continue examining criminal justice, child welfare, education, and other policies and recommend changes that will improve outcomes for children at each stage of the criminal justice continuum, from parental arrest through incarceration and reentry.

### **Death Penalty Abolition**

**Texas Defender Service (TDS)**, \$950,000 general support renewal over two years to maintain capacity for key trial and post-conviction litigation activities aimed at reducing the number of death sentences and executions in Texas and thus the nation. The grant will allow TDS to



















































































