

Senate Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government

Outside Witness Testimony
Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations

Statement of Kevin Jordan
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Chair Van Hollen, Ranking Member Hagerty, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, I am honored to have the opportunity to submit my testimony on behalf of over 40,000 treatment court professionals working in adult drug courts, family treatment courts, juvenile drug courts, tribal healing to wellness courts, impaired-driving courts, and veterans treatment courts. As our nation continues to fight the substance use disorder crisis, I am requesting Congress provide level funding of \$3 million for the Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance Program at the Office of National Drug Control Policy for fiscal year 2024.

I serve as the prosecuting attorney on the St. Mary's County Adult Substance Abuse Recovery Court in Maryland. Treatment court programs, like the one I am part of, unite public health and public safety to transform the justice system's response to substance use and mental health by combining evidence-based treatment with accountability. Since their inception, treatment courts have helped 1.5 million people find recovery. Contributing to this unprecedented success is an abiding commitment to following evidence-based best practices, robust and ongoing training and technical assistance, and continued federal funding such as the Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance Program at the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

As a member of the drug court team, I see firsthand how training and technical assistance saves lives. The training our court receives at the state and national level is critical to ensuring we meet the rigorous evidence-based standards proven to increase positive outcomes and serve the unique needs of the participants in our program. Research shows that treatment courts whose teams participate in training see a 55% reduction in recidivism among program graduates.

In drug court, I have seen people mired in the depths of addiction be transformed by the combination of accountability and support we provide. They are parents, professionals, veterans, and counselors; they reunite with their families and become productive members of the community.

Timothy is just one of many examples. After losing two brothers and his mother within 18 months of each other, he started to self-medicate with drugs to cope with his grief. A bone disease made it impossible for him to work, and with more time on his hands his addiction took over his life. He became estranged from his wife and twin daughters and turned to criminal activity to support his substance use. He was arrested for theft and accepted into drug court.

While in the program, the well-trained court team used evidence-based assessments to identify his distinct needs and he received the individualized support and treatment services that he needed. This was combined with structure and accountability, and soon he began a path of recovery. Today, he is once again a proud father to his grown daughters. He has dedicated his career to helping others who struggle with substance use disorders turn their lives around and manages two Oxford House reentry homes.

Timothy's story is one of many, but thousands of others in our communities need treatment courts to help them once again become productive members of society. These programs rely on training and technical assistance to ensure they continue to provide quality, evidence-based care to participants struggling with mental health and substance use disorders. I encourage this committee to provide level funding of \$3 million for the Drug Court Training and Technical Assistance Program at the Office of National Drug Control Policy, so courts can continue to help people like Timothy and the many more who these programs benefit.