

**REMARKS**

**OF**

**MARY LOU LEARY  
ACTING ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL  
OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS**

**AT THE**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE'S  
GLOBAL JUSTICE INFORMATION SHARING INITIATIVE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE BI-ANNUAL MEETING**

**ON**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 2012  
WASHINGTON, DC**

Thank you, Denise, for that introduction. And thanks for the tremendous leadership you provide the Bureau of Justice Assistance and to Global. I know BJA has been a very supportive home for the GAC – and the Global-DOJ partnership is richer because of your office’s involvement.

It’s my pleasure to join Denise and Bob in welcoming all of you to this meeting. I’m particularly pleased to have this opportunity early in my position as Acting Assistant Attorney General to express my strong commitment to the work you’re doing. Your focus on meeting practitioner needs with knowledge generated by the field is truly commendable. It’s an approach I’ve always valued in my years with the Department – and one I’ll continue to emphasize as Acting AAG.

I’m also excited to lead a great team at OJP that shares this philosophy. In addition to Denise, you’ll hear from our colleagues, John Laub, Jim Lynch, and Mel Hanes, later this morning. I’m also very glad that our friend and partner at COPS – Barney Melekian – will join them. And I have to single out BJA’s Justice Information Sharing Team under the very capable leadership of Patrick McCreary. They’ve done an outstanding job leading OJP’s Global efforts. Denise and I rely on them implicitly, and we’ll continue to depend on their expert counsel.

Since this is my first Global meeting as Acting AAG, I thought it would be appropriate to speak to you briefly about my goals for OJP. Over the last three years, I think we’ve made great strides in a number of important areas – and Global’s work has been key to our progress. I want to keep pushing forward and build on this momentum.

We’ve helped advance the role of science in criminal justice policy and practice. With leadership and support from both President Obama and Attorney General Holder, we’ve seen an unprecedented commitment to integrating research into our programs. You can see this in the two-percent research set-aside in the President’s budget. It’s shown by the President’s appointment of two respected scientists – John Laub and Jim Lynch – to head our National Institute of Justice and Bureau of Justice Statistics. And it’s evident in the AG’s appointment of a Science Advisory Board to guide OJP’s work and in his overall emphasis on smart-on-crime approaches.

We’ve also helped move the field to a more evidence-based mindset, which I know is a goal all of you share. Last year, we launched CrimeSolutions.gov, which now has a database of more than 180 criminal and juvenile justice programs, all rated for effectiveness. And I’m excited that we’ve just opened a new Diagnostic Center that serves as a one-stop consultation service to help policymakers apply evidence-based solutions.

Perhaps most importantly, we’ve strengthened ties with our state, local, and tribal stakeholders. And I want to underscore how important this idea of partnership is to OJP – because it really is the foundation of Global’s success.

No one here needs to be reminded that we're all working in a challenging environment. Our justice and public safety responsibilities seem to multiply almost daily. Meanwhile, our resources seem to shrink at about the same pace. We're all being asked to maintain our productivity, think creatively, and support innovative solutions – and the only way to respond is by pooling our resources and our ideas, and by working together.

This is something Global has been doing for many years. I know you've heard us say it over and over again, but the Global process has always been ahead of its time. You've always put a premium on collaboration, transparency, and partnership-building, and that has served you – and the rest of the justice community – well.

Just to give a couple of current examples, you're working closely with national leaders like Kshemendra Paul, who'll be here this afternoon. And your partnership with the IJIS Institute may be one of the most successful public-private partnerships in the justice arena. The Springboard Initiative and the Global Standards Council are creating innovative, standards-based, interoperable solutions that will help take Global to the next level. And I want to thank Steve Ambrosini and Paul Wormeli from IJIS for their continued commitment and support of Global.

These are excellent examples of the advantages of leveraging partnerships. I want to continue building on these relationships.

I also want to encourage you in your adoption of evidence-based approaches. I know you're already moving forward here. I think it's great you're showcasing efforts like Indiana's Data Exchange Project and the work Montana's doing with the Global Reference Architecture to support victim information and notification. And I'm glad you'll be highlighting promising practices in information sharing like the Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network and other mobile communication initiatives.

I think this kind of exchange of knowledge will significantly enhance our information sharing capabilities – and I want to offer my pledge that OJP will continue to support your efforts to take these best practices to scale. We're uniquely positioned to help you do this.

But Denise and I also know the responsibility for protecting our communities falls squarely on your shoulders. We can be effective only if we're giving you the tools you need. That's why we need to continue this dialogue. We need you to continue highlighting for us the most pressing challenges you're facing, and tell us how we can best help you meet those challenges. I want this to remain, as it has been, a true partnership.

And just one more thing: It doesn't go unnoticed that, as GAC members, you volunteer your time in the middle of incredibly busy schedules and in spite of numerous obligations. I just want you to know, on behalf of OJP and the Department of Justice, that we are tremendously grateful for your service.

I'm very proud of the work OJP and Global have been able to accomplish together. I think we've made a tremendous difference in the quality of information sharing across the justice system – and in the quality of justice as a whole. More than ever, the work of the Global Information Sharing Initiative – and your work as part of the Advisory Committee – are central to effective public safety in America. You should be proud of your record of achievement. I thank you for your contributions, and I look forward to what we'll do together in the months and years ahead.

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