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January 29, 2018

Karen E. Spilka, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
State House
Room 212
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Spilka:

This letter is sent pursuant to our statutory reporting requirements concerning the Plymouth County District Attorney's Community Based Juvenile Justice Program. I am pleased to report that during the calendar year 2017, Plymouth County District Attorney's Office - in combination with school, police, and juvenile court officials in Plymouth County - has continued to experience support of and participation in the Community Based Juvenile Justice Program in Plymouth County.

Twenty-six towns, in addition to the City of Brockton, are a part of the Community Based Juvenile Justice Program. We coordinate five separate groups that meet regularly: four that usually meet monthly and the Brockton group meets approximately every other week. Throughout the past year, each of our groups has shown attendance and participation in the program.

As in past years, the meetings are held early in the morning and are short in duration, usually lasting approximately 30 minutes, to accommodate the professional schedules of each of the participants. The meetings are typically chaired by the supervisor of the Plymouth County Community Based Juvenile Justice Program or by an assistant district attorney for the particular juvenile court. The District Attorney's office prepares and presents information concerning specific events and persons whose conduct poses a threat to members of the community at large or to a particular school or neighborhood.

A list of the most serious juvenile offenders is discussed each meeting and information and suggestions produced by the group concerning offenses or offenders are used to update the list and to help develop appropriate recommendations for disposition in the Juvenile Court.

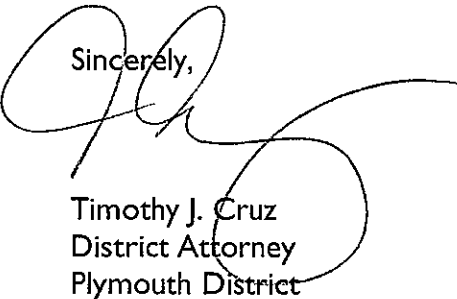
During the calendar year 2017, 42 meetings were conducted throughout Plymouth County, during which the groups identified and discussed approximately 273 cases pending in the juvenile court involving felonies or offenders whose conduct posed a threat to their communities, neighborhoods or schools. This approximate number is lower than that of last year which was approximately 311 cases.

I am happy to report that as a result of the information sharing and collaboration that occurs at these meetings, important interventions have been implemented for many youth. Such interventions include, but are not limited to, educational placement and referral services, counseling to address anger management and truancy prevention orders.

We continue to compile statistical information relating to the number of juveniles prosecuted as youthful offenders. In 2017, 3 juveniles were indicted as youthful offenders, with a total of 8 indictments being returned by the grand jury during the calendar year. These numbers are comparable to the year 2016, where 3 juveniles were indicted as youthful offenders and a total of 9 indictments were returned by the grand jury.

The Community Based Juvenile Justice Program continues to be an extremely valuable resource to the educational and law enforcement communities of Plymouth County. This office renews its request for the continued support of this very important program, which is an invaluable tool in promoting public safety in our schools and communities.

Sincerely,



Timothy J. Cruz
District Attorney
Plymouth District

TJC:krs

cc: ✓ William F. Welch, Senate Clerk