

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 10496

To authorize the Attorney General to make grants to strengthen the provision of legal representation to individuals in judicial proceedings that take place after the individual has been arrested in connection with a criminal offense, including at initial appearance.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 18, 2024

Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania (for herself and Ms. SCANLON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To authorize the Attorney General to make grants to strengthen the provision of legal representation to individuals in judicial proceedings that take place after the individual has been arrested in connection with a criminal offense, including at initial appearance.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “True Justice Act of
5 2024”.

1 **SEC. 2. PUBLIC DEFENDER GRANT PROGRAM.**

2 (a) PUBLIC DEFENDER SERVICES GRANTS.—The
3 Attorney General is authorized to make grants to States,
4 units of local government (as such term is defined in sec-
5 tion 901(a) of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe
6 Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C. 10251(a))), and public de-
7 fender offices to provide legal representation to individuals
8 in judicial proceedings that take place after the individual
9 has been arrested in connection with a criminal offense,
10 including at initial appearance.

11 (b) PUBLIC DEFENDER TRAINING GRANTS.—The
12 Attorney General is authorized to make grants to States,
13 units of local government, and non-profit organizations to
14 provide training to public defenders, court-appointed at-
15 torneys, and contract attorneys on best practices for rep-
16 resenting individuals in judicial proceedings described in
17 subsection (a).

18 (c) APPLICATION.—An entity seeking a grant under
19 this section shall submit to the Attorney General an appli-
20 cation at such time, in such manner, and containing such
21 information as the Attorney General may reasonably re-
22 quire.

23 (d) AMOUNT.—In determining the amount of a grant
24 under this section, the Attorney General shall take into
25 account, with respect to the receiving entity—

1 (1) the cost of any technology and training that
2 the entity will require in order to provide the serv-
3 ices under subsection (a) or the training under sub-
4 section (b), as applicable; and

5 (2) the size of the justice system that the entity
6 administers or in which the entity participates, as
7 applicable, relative to the size of other justice sys-
8 tems in—

9 (A) the United States, if the entity is a
10 State or a public defender’s office of a State;

11 (B) the State in which the entity is lo-
12 cated, if the entity is a unit of local government
13 (other than an Indian Tribe) or a public de-
14 fender’s office of a unit of local government
15 (other than an Indian Tribe); or

16 (C) of the Indian Tribe, if the entity is a
17 Tribal organization or a public defender’s office
18 of a Tribal organization.

19 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
20 authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General to
21 carry out this section \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years
22 2025 through 2029.

23 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

24 It is the sense of Congress that the constitutional
25 right to counsel established by the Supreme Court in *Gid-*

- 1 eon v. Wainwright (372 U.S. 335) applies to any and all
- 2 post-arrest proceedings.

