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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attorney General Josh Kaul, Multistate Coalition Win Court Ruling Protecting Law Enforcement Funding

Trump administration conditions threatened more than $6 million in Wisconsin

MADISON, Wis. — Attorney General Josh Kaul and a coalition secured a victory in court that blocks the Trump administration from imposing immigration-enforcement conditions on Congressionally authorized public safety grants, including grants intended to keep communities safe and fight crime.

District of Rhode Island Chief Judge John J. McConnell, Jr. declared the Trump administration's actions unlawful and permanently enjoined any implementation or enforcement of these illegal conditions.

"This is good news for public safety in Wisconsin," said AG Kaul. "The Trump administration shouldn't have tried to force states to choose between funding that benefits public safety and complying with unlawful conditions."

In 2025, the Trump administration — disregarding the clear letter of the law and intent of Congress — declared that states would be unable to access Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funds unless they agreed to the administration's extreme immigration demands. The multistate coalition succeeded in getting the federal government to remove those conditions on over $1.3 billion of VOCA funds, including more than $24 million in federal funding for victim service programs in Wisconsin.

However, earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) applied those illegal conditions to new grants, including funds dedicated to law enforcement and juvenile justice. Altogether, these conditions threatened more than $6 million across

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affected grant programs in Wisconsin. The coalition expanded its lawsuit in August to challenge these conditions.

Among the affected programs was the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Formula Grants (known as the Byrne JAG Program). The Byrne JAG Program was named after a rookie New York City Police Department officer who was ambushed in his patrol car while protecting a witness in a drug case in 1988. For decades, regardless of which political party held power, the Byrne JAG Program has been the leading federal source of criminal justice funding to state and local governments. Wisconsin was at risk of losing a $3.2 million JAG award for the coming year.

Wisconsin was also at risk of losing approximately $2.1 million in funding through the Byrne State Crisis Intervention Program (SCIP) and more than $800,000 through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). The SCIP grant is intended to assist state and local efforts to reduce violent crime and gun-related violence. The OJJDP Title II Formula Grants Program supports statewide and local delinquency prevention and juvenile justice system improvements.

Joining AG Kaul in filing the lawsuit were the attorneys general of California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and the District of Columbia, as well as the governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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