Vera INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE

April 9, 2025

Attorney General Bondi —

Last Friday, April 4, 2025, we received a notice of termination (the "Notice") from the Department of Justice of five grants to my organization, the Vera Institute of Justice. These cuts, which total approximately $5 million, are all of Vera's federal funding. The stated justification in the Notice was that our work "no longer effectuate[s] the program goals or agency priorities."

Here are the programs and services that your cuts will endanger: (1) supporting police and law enforcement to better serve deaf survivors of domestic violence; (2) helping correctional staff across the country improve prison operations, training, and culture to instill dignity and deliver more safety both for officers and people incarcerated; and (3) working with cities to launch and expand access to counseling and treatment for people in mental health crisis. I am surprised that these critical interventions, which make our communities safer, do not fall squarely within your agency priorities.

Founded in 1961, Vera seeks to advance safety and justice for all. We work in more than 40 states and across political lines to pilot and test solutions, scale our impact, and move the needle on what is possible to prevent crime, respond to crises, stop violence, and rely less on failed policies that have resulted in too many people behind bars and not made our communities any safer. Delivering more safety and justice is a goal shared by a majority of Americans—not only the Black and Latino communities, and people in poverty, who have disproportionately borne the brunt of mass incarceration's failures, but the dedicated public servants and staff who work in the criminal justice and immigration systems as well. Vera has for decades received federal funding, under Democratic and Republican administrations, to serve all of them.

We do this work with humility, but we are clear and unflinching in our values and principles. Of the dozens of similar organizations that receive federal funding from the Department of Justice, we are the only one we know of that has had its grants terminated so abruptly. And, given the relatively small size of our grants compared to the Department's grant budget of almost $6 billion, trimming waste and gaining efficiency is not a credible justification. This leads us to believe that we are being targeted for our public opposition to President Trump's mass deportation agenda and his gutting of federal funds for mental health and drug treatment, among other actions.

We urge you to restore our funding and to preserve your Office's grants to other organizations like ours. The work we do is essential for more safety and justice across this great country.

Yours truly,



Nicholas R. Turner
President and Director
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