

REMARKS  
AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY

OF

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AT THE

KENTUCKY  
VICTIM ADVOCATE AND SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

ON

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2019  
ELIZABETHTOWN, KY

Thank you. Governor Bevin, it's an honor to join you in announcing the roll-out of this fantastic new program. I bring greetings from our Attorney General, Bill Barr, who sends his congratulations, and his thanks to the brave men and women of the Kentucky State Police who work so hard to protect the citizens of this great state.

Let me also extend my thanks to our outstanding U.S. Attorneys—Russell Coleman from the Western District of Kentucky and Robert Duncan from the Eastern District. These gentlemen provide incredible leadership—they are committed to reducing violent crime and to getting victims the help they need and deserve.

It's so gratifying to lend our support to something as promising as the Kentucky Victim Advocate and Support Services Program. We all know that the first contact a crime victim has with the criminal justice system is through a law enforcement officer. And the way that officer treats the victim—whether well or poorly—will leave a lasting impression. I've heard victims say, "If you're good to us, if you treat us well, with kindness and compassion, especially in our time of greatest need, we will remember you forever. But if you don't treat us well, if you're insensitive or dismissive, we will remember you FOREVER!"

We know that Kentucky State Troopers do everything in their power to help a victim in need, and we are grateful that they are so fiercely committed to protecting their fellow citizens. But as highly trained professionals themselves, they understand the value of having well-trained victim advocates on hand to meet victims and make quality referrals. That's what this program is about, and I commend Commissioner Sanders for his willingness to work with us to support this outreach to victims in Kentucky.

Law enforcement-based victim services are so critically important to our mission at the Department of Justice, and we're thrilled that Kentucky will be leading the way. I'm so proud that we're able to help provide funding for this program, and I'm especially proud that the money that supports it comes through the federal Crime Victims Fund, which is made up of federal criminal fines and penalties, not taxpayer dollars. This week, we are awarding more than \$1.2 billion to fund victim assistance programs in 32 states, including right here in Kentucky, which will receive more than \$30 million in victim assistance support.

I'm excited to see the great things happening here in Kentucky, and I look forward to see the amazing results that this program will deliver to victims across the state. I'm confident that it will serve as a model for other states, and I'm hopeful that it will set a new standard for law enforcement agencies everywhere as they respond to the victims they so compassionately serve.

Again, my thanks and congratulations to Governor Bevin and his staff, to Commissioner Sanders and all the post commanders and staff, and to the people of the great state of Kentucky who are fortunate to be protected by the thin gray line of the Kentucky State Police.

Thank you.

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