



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA**  
*Office of the Attorney General*

**Jason S. Miyares**  
Attorney General

202 North 9th Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
804-786-2071  
FAX 804-786-1991  
Virginia Relay Services  
800-828-1120

August 16, 2022

**VIA E-MAIL AND U.S. MAIL**

The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine  
United States Senator  
231 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C., 20510

The Honorable Jennifer L. Wexton  
United States Congresswoman  
1217 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C., 20515

The Honorable Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator  
703 Hart Office Building  
Washington, D.C., 20510

The Honorable Benjamin Cline  
United States Congressman  
2443 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C., 20515

**Re: Virginia Army National Guard Counter Drug Unit Budget Reductions**

Dear Senator Warner, Senator Kaine, Congressman Cline, and Congresswoman Wexton,

I write to urge you to continue full funding of the National Guard, including all programs it operates, without any budget reductions for the coming budget cycle. It has come to my attention that the latest congressional budget proposal for fiscal year 2023 includes reductions for the National Guard Counter Drug Program, which will result in budget reductions for the Virginia Army National Guard (VANG) Counter Drug Units. According to information received by my office, the current congressional proposal for funding VANG Counter Drug unit indicates a 10% reduction in the program in Virginia, resulting in a reduction of approximately \$337,000. This reduction will decrease staffing within VANG Counter Drug Units in Virginia.

As you are both aware, our nation continues to face a drug crisis, with the latest statistics demonstrating over 107,000 people died in the United States from drug overdoses in 2021.<sup>1</sup> Given

---

<sup>1</sup> "Provisional data from CDC's National Center for Health Statistics indicate there were an estimated 107,622 drug overdose deaths in the United States during 2021, an increase of nearly 15% from the 93,655 deaths estimated in 2020."

the scope of this crisis, any reduction in law enforcement resources, such as those provided by VANG's Counter Drug Unit, are detrimental to our ongoing efforts to keep communities safe and provide necessary resources to law enforcement agencies on the front lines of this crisis.

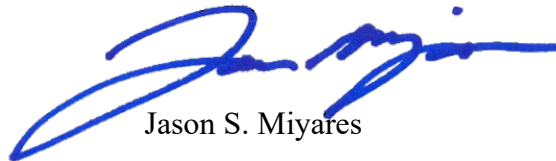
The VANG Counter Drug Units are instrumental partners to law enforcement agencies across the Commonwealth of Virginia. Their support is especially significant to law enforcement agencies in Southwest Virginia, where most agencies do not have the budgetary resources to hire analysts. The VANG Counter Drug Units work in tandem with United States Marshals Service (USMS) offices throughout the Commonwealth to support local law enforcement agencies. These fulltime, active-duty VANG analysts are housed in USMS offices, provided necessary equipment to conduct and aid investigations, and trained by USMS staff. These analysts provide valuable resources to law enforcement agencies, to include:

- Coordinate with county/municipality Drug Investigation Units to provide analytical support for investigations and dangerous drug seizures;
- Coordinate with investigators to review data received pursuant to legal process and conduct analyses;
- Produce flow charts, graphs, or data for investigators and prosecutors;
- Aid the United States Marshals Service (USMS), via the Capital Area Regional Fugitive Task Force (CARFTF), to adopt locality and state warrants for the apprehension of violent offenders and drug offenders;
- Aid the CARFTF member agencies (including all SWVA Sheriff's Offices) by providing analytical support to investigators to locate dangerous, wanted offenders;
- Conduct forensic cellular analysis and extraction from cellular devices for investigators;
- Perform monthly reviews of violent offender warrants from assigned localities, to ascertain status and further analytical support;
- Provide on-site analytical support to partner agencies;
- Provide analytical support to the Southwest Virginia Missing Child Unit;
- Provide analytical support on human trafficking investigations;
- Create reports and statistical overview of data for investigators and executive leadership; and
- Manage virtual command centers for active critical incidents, providing officers with continuous information flow.

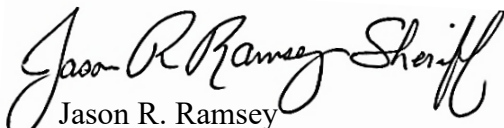
As evidenced above, the VANG Counter Drug Unit analysts provide critical law enforcement support for not only drug investigations, but also support many serious criminal investigations. These analysts provide critical assistance to law enforcement across the Commonwealth, in turn helping reduce drugs and violent crime in our communities. The current proposed budget reductions would result in the loss of five VNG Counter Drug Unit analysts across the Commonwealth, one of which would be lost in Southwest Virginia. The loss of this analyst in SWVA would leave only two VANG Counter Drug analysts to provide support for the 52 counties in the Western District of Virginia. As you are both aware, this region is already underserved, underfunded, and has long been nearest the epicenter of the opioid crisis in our country.

I've shared this information with my partners in law enforcement, to include Commonwealth's Attorneys and Sheriffs, especially across Southwest Virginia where the loss of an analyst position will have the most impact. I, along with my undersigned partners, strongly urge you to support full funding, without any reductions, of the Virginia Army National Guard Counter Drug Unit, as well as all such units nationwide. We fully support the important work these units perform to aid and assist law enforcement in the Commonwealth and our communities, especially those in Southwest Virginia who have faced the most significant impact of the drug crisis in the Commonwealth. Any staffing reductions of these units will be felt by law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve, unnecessarily disrupting their important duties due to funding reductions.


Sincerely,




Jason S. Miyares




Jason R. Ramsey  
Bland County Sheriff



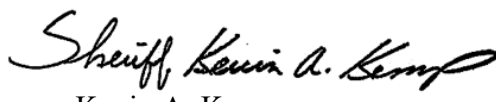
John Austin  
City of Bristol Chief of Police



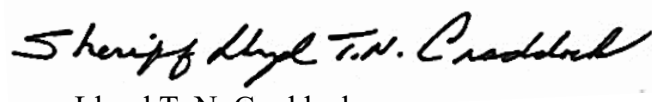
R. Tyrone Foster  
City of Bristol Sheriff



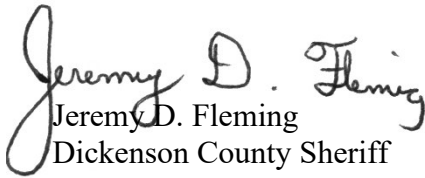
John C. McClanahan  
Buchanan County Sheriff



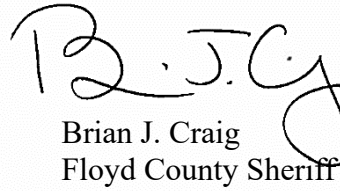
Kevin A. Kemp  
Carroll County Sheriff



Lloyd T. N. Craddock  
Craig County Sheriff



Jeremy D. Fleming  
Dickenson County Sheriff



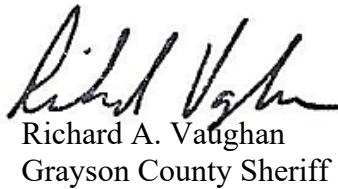
Brian J. Craig  
Floyd County Sheriff



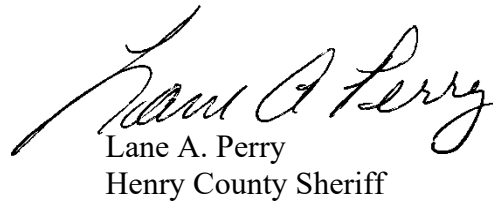
W.Q. "Bill" Overton, Jr.  
Franklin County Sheriff



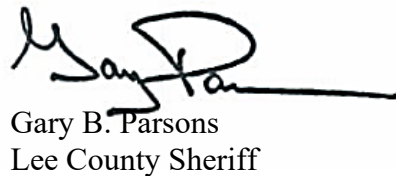
W. Morgan Millirons  
Giles County Sheriff



Richard A. Vaughan  
Grayson County Sheriff



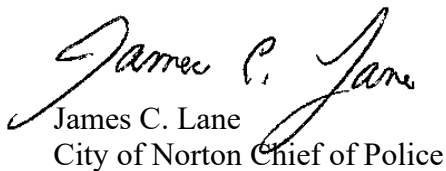
Lane A. Perry  
Henry County Sheriff



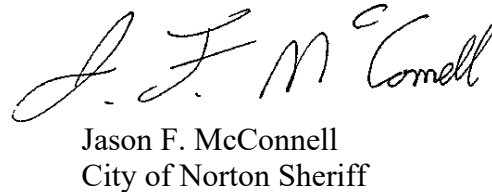
Gary B. Parsons  
Lee County Sheriff



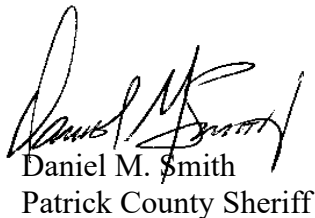
C.H. "Hank" Partin  
Montgomery County Sheriff



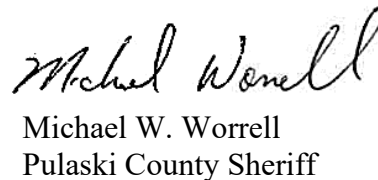
James C. Lane  
City of Norton Chief of Police



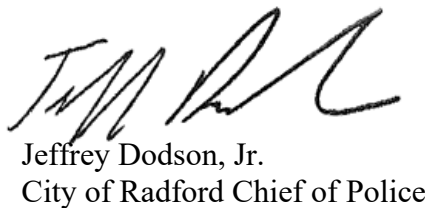
Jason F. McConnell  
City of Norton Sheriff



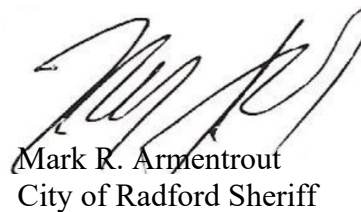
Daniel M. Smith  
Patrick County Sheriff



Michael W. Worrell  
Pulaski County Sheriff



Jeffrey Dodson, Jr.  
City of Radford Chief of Police



Mark R. Armentrout  
City of Radford Sheriff



Samuel Roman, Jr.  
City of Roanoke Chief of Police



Antonio D. Hash  
City of Roanoke Sheriff



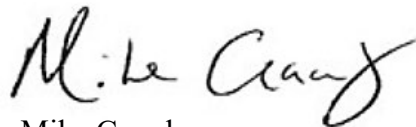
J. Eric Orange  
Roanoke County Sheriff

(Separate letter of support enclosed)

Howard B. Hall  
Roanoke County Police Department



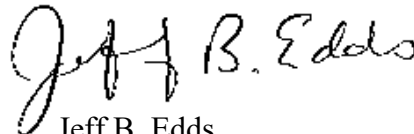
Steven L. Dye  
Russell County Sheriff



Mike Crawley  
City of Salem Chief of Police



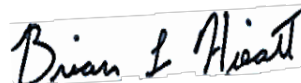
April M. Staton  
City of Salem Sheriff



Jeff B. Edds  
Scott County Sheriff



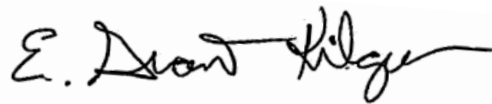
B.C. "Chip" Shuler  
Smyth County Sheriff



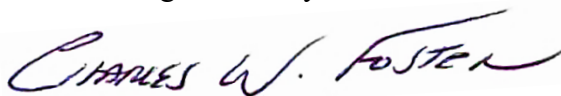
Brian L. Hieatt  
Tazewell County Sheriff



R. Blake Andis  
Washington County Sheriff



E. Grant Kilgore  
Wise County Sheriff



Charles W. Foster  
Wythe County Sheriff



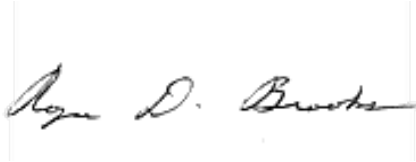
Patrick D. White  
Bland County Commonwealth's Attorney



Jerry A. Wolfe  
City of Bristol Commonwealth's Attorney



Gerald D. Arrington  
Buchanan County Commonwealth's Attorney



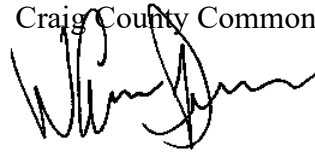
Roger D. Brooks  
Carroll County Commonwealth's Attorney



Matthew Dunne  
Craig County Commonwealth's Attorney



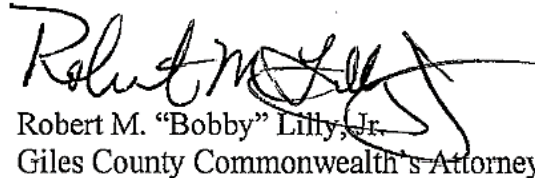
Joshua H. Newberry  
Dickenson County Commonwealth's Attorney



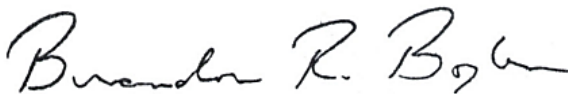
W. Eric Branscom  
Floyd County Commonwealth's Attorney



W. Cooper Brown  
Franklin County Commonwealth's Attorney



Robert M. "Bobby" Lilly, Jr.  
Giles County Commonwealth's Attorney



Brandon R. Boyles  
Grayson County Commonwealth's Attorney



M. Andrew Nester  
Henry County Commonwealth's Attorney



H. Fuller Cridlin  
Lee County Commonwealth's Attorney



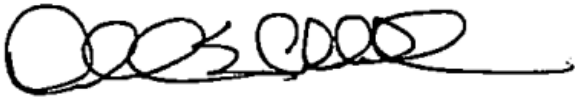
Mary K. Pettitt  
Montgomery County Commonwealth's Attorney




Justin L. Griffith  
Pulaski County Commonwealth's Attorney



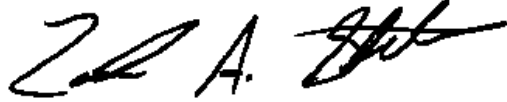
Christian E. Rehak  
City of Radford Commonwealth's Attorney



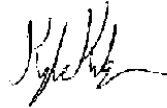
Donald S. Caldwell  
City of Roanoke Commonwealth's Attorney



Brian T. Holohan  
Roanoke County Commonwealth's Attorney



Zachary A. Stoots  
Russell County Commonwealth's Attorney



Kyle B. Kilgore  
Scott County Commonwealth's Attorney



Roy F. Evans  
Smyth County Commonwealth's Attorney



J. Christopher Plaster  
Tazewell County Commonwealth's Attorney



Joshua S. Cumbow  
Washington County Commonwealth's Attorney



Steven C. Davis  
Wise County/Norton Commonwealth's Attorney



Michael D. Jones  
Wythe County Commonwealth's Attorney

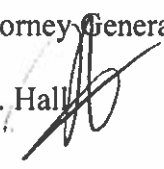
- c:     The Honorable H. Morgan Griffith, United States House of Representatives  
        The Honorable Robert P. Mosier, Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Safety  
        The Honorable Terry G. Kilgore, Virginia House of Delegates, Majority Leader  
        The Honorable Todd E. Pillion, Virginia Senate



## ROANOKE COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mr. Matthew C. Hall  
Office of the Attorney General

**FROM:** Chief Howard B. Hall 

**DATE:** August 2, 2022

**SUBJECT:** VANG Counter Drug Unit Budget

I have reviewed the letter drafted by Attorney General Miyares regarding the continued funding of the VANG Counter Drug Unit. I fully support the important work of this unit and the need to maintain its funding. I concur with the Attorney General's letter.