

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4876

To establish a Science Advisory Board at the Department of Justice, and
for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 30, 2021

Ms. DEAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee
on the Judiciary

A BILL

To establish a Science Advisory Board at the Department
of Justice, and for other purposes.

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 “Improving Justice Pro-
5 grams through Science Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD.**

7 (a) AMENDMENT.—Part A of title I of the Omnibus
8 Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C.
9 10101 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
10 lowing:

1 **“SEC. 110. SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD.**

2 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within
3 the Office a Science Advisory Board (in this section re-
4 ferred to as the ‘Board’)—

5 “(1) which shall be composed of 26 senior rep-
6 resentatives of academic institutions, including pri-
7 mary and secondary educational institutions, institu-
8 tions of higher education, advanced technology edu-
9 cation, and other related entities, and criminal jus-
10 tice and juvenile justice professionals, appointed in
11 accordance with subsection (c); and

12 “(2) the purpose of which shall be to—

13 “(A) foster sustained dialogue between the
14 academic and criminal and juvenile justice com-
15 munities on research-based policies; and

16 “(B) advise the Attorney General with re-
17 spect to—

18 “(i) relevant developments in criminal
19 and juvenile justice research;

20 “(ii) the implications of developments
21 described in clause (i) for Federal, State,
22 and local criminal and juvenile justice
23 agencies; and

24 “(iii) any other matters as requested
25 by the Attorney General.

1 “(b) CHARTER.—There shall be a charter to govern
2 the structure and mission of the Board, which shall—

3 “(1) direct the Board to focus on the depart-
4 mental application of science and evidence under the
5 guidance of the Attorney General; and

6 “(2) be reviewed and updated every 4 years, as
7 appropriate.

8 “(c) MEMBERS.—

9 “(1) APPOINTMENT.—The 26 members of the
10 Board shall—

11 “(A) be appointed by the Attorney Gen-
12 eral, in consultation with the Assistant Attorney
13 General of the Office and considering rec-
14 ommendations from—

15 “(i) the Director of the National In-
16 stitute of Justice;

17 “(ii) the Director Bureau of Justice
18 Statistics;

19 “(iii) the Director of the Office for
20 Victims of Crime;

21 “(iv) the Director of the Office of Sex
22 Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, and
23 Tracking; and

24 “(v) the Director of the Office of Ju-
25 venile Justice and Delinquency Prevention;

1 “(B) include senior representatives with a
2 balance of backgrounds, experiences, and view-
3 points that will include the expertise of sci-
4 entific, criminal justice, and juvenile justice
5 professionals;

6 “(C) include not fewer than 8 researchers
7 in the field of statistics, evaluation, social
8 sciences, or physical and biological sciences,
9 which may include those researchers rec-
10 ommended by the National Academy of
11 Sciences;

12 “(D) be selected to achieve a balance of
13 backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints that
14 will include the expertise of scientific, criminal
15 justice, and juvenile justice practitioners; and

16 “(E) include not less than three-fifths of
17 the members who hold terminal degrees in their
18 field, have published researcher, and are leading
19 research in areas, including—

20 “(i) criminology;

21 “(ii) criminal justice;

22 “(iii) juvenile justice;

23 “(iv) tribal justice;

24 “(v) statistics;

25 “(vi) economics;

- 1 “(vii) sociology;
- 2 “(viii) psychology;
- 3 “(ix) political science; and
- 4 “(x) other relevant sciences.

5 “(2) TERMS.—The term of each member ap-
6 pointed under paragraph (1) shall be 4 years.

7 “(3) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy in the member-
8 ship of the Board shall—

9 “(A) not affect the powers of the Board;

10 “(B) be filled in the same manner as the
11 original appointment; and

12 “(C) be only for the remainder of the term
13 of the original appointment.

14 “(4) CHAIRPERSON.—The Attorney General,
15 with the advice and recommendation of the Assistant
16 Attorney General, shall appoint 1 member of the
17 Science Advisory Board to serve as the Chairperson
18 of the Board.

19 “(d) MEETINGS.—The Board shall—

20 “(1) meet on a regular basis to discuss science,
21 research, and ongoing criminal and juvenile justice
22 departmental activities, including coordination with
23 other Federal, State, local, tribal, territorial, and
24 private sector partners; and

1 “(2) make recommendations to the Assistant
2 Attorney General;

3 “(3) provide advice and recommendations con-
4 cerning support for research, statistics, and grant
5 programs of the Office;

6 “(4) serve as a point of contact with the aca-
7 demic and practitioner communities to inform the
8 Office of the impact of the research, statistics, and
9 grant programs of the Office on both the academic
10 community and the criminal and juvenile justice
11 fields;

12 “(5) offer broad input into long-range plans
13 and partnership opportunities;

14 “(6) serve as a forum for consideration of pro-
15 posed interdisciplinary projects across the sciences;
16 and

17 “(7) advise on policy development, program im-
18 plementation and evaluation, and identify research
19 needs and opportunities.

20 “(e) SUPPORT.—The Attorney General shall ensure
21 that the Board complies with the requirements under—

22 “(1) the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5
23 U.S.C. App.);

24 “(2) section 552b of title 5 (commonly known
25 as the ‘Government in the Sunshine Act’); and

1 “(3) any—

2 “(A) governing Federal statute or regula-
3 tion; or

4 “(B) relevant policy or procedure of the
5 Department of Justice.”.

6 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date
7 of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the At-
8 torney General shall submit to the Committee on the Judi-
9 ciary of the Senate and the Committee on the Judiciary
10 of the House of Representatives a report on the status
11 and activities of the Science Advisory Board established
12 under section 110 of title I of the Omnibus Crime Control
13 and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as added by subsection (a)
14 of this Act.

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