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Sheriff Ontario Co.

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Chief of Police, Massena

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Director, Jenna Foundation
Daughter, Jenna was murdered in 1997

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District Attorney, Saratoga Co.
Chair, Board of Directors,
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Sheriff, Montgomery Co.

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Husband, murdered in 1994

PATRICIA BODNAR
Husband, Alex murdered in 1990

DEREK CHAMPAGNE
District Attorney, Franklin Co.

BARBARA CONNELLY
Son, James, murdered at age 15 in 1979

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*Hundreds of Police Chiefs, Sheriffs,
Prosecutors, other Law Enforcement
Leaders, and Violence Survivors
Preventing Crime and Violence*

Testimony

2013 Joint Legislative Hearing

Human Services Committee

Submitted by Jenn O'Connor, NYS Director

February 5, 2013

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Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing us to submit testimony today.

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids is an organization of more than 300 police chiefs, sheriffs, district attorneys and crime survivors across the state who support investments in proven prevention strategies.

Research-based maternal, infant, and early childhood home visiting is one of those strategies, and Healthy Families New York is one of those programs. Funding was maintained in the 2013-14 Executive Budget, for which we are grateful. Here's why.

While most survivors of childhood abuse and neglect never become violent criminals, research shows that an estimated 3,000 of the 77,000 victims of abuse and neglect in New York in 2010 will. These same people would have avoided such crimes if not for the abuse and neglect they endured as children. Programs such as Healthy Families New York show large reductions in child abuse and neglect.

In law enforcement, we know that if we stop the cycle of abuse, it reduces crime, makes our citizens safer, and we have less victims.

While we are not asking for additional funding for Healthy Families New York this year, we wanted you to be aware that funding has been the same for the past 4 years—\$23.288 million.

Consequently, the number of families receiving Healthy Families New York home visiting services is down about 25% since 2008-09. While this is partly due to disruptions of services / temporary cessation at some sites during two years of severe budget delays, it is surely also because 2008 dollars don't go as far in 2012.

We are working with our allies to do a closer analysis of the impact of the flat funding on children and families throughout New York State. We hope that you will continue to support this essential home visiting program and will be open to a discussion about the negative impact that level funding has had and will continue to have in the future.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.