

United States Department of Justice



Community Relations Service FY 2021 Performance Budget

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COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE

I. Overview for Community Relations Service

FY 2021 Budget Request

The Community Relations Service (CRS), an agency within the U.S. Department of Justice, was established by Title X of the historic Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000g et seq.) and signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 2, 1964. In addition, pursuant to the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act enacted in 2009, CRS is authorized to work with communities to help them develop the capacity to prevent and respond more effectively to violent hate crimes allegedly committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

CRS engages in two key activities: (1) providing assistance to State and local communities in the prevention and resolution of tension, violence, and civil disorders relating to actual or perceived discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; and (2) working with communities to voluntarily develop and employ locally defined strategies to prevent and respond to violent hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. In FY 2022, the Department proposes to support CRS's functions with a request for 70 positions (including 2 attorneys), and \$20,039,000.

Program Overview

CRS's headquarters is in Washington, D.C. and is a single decision unit that plays a significant role in accomplishing **DOJ's Strategic Goal #2 –Prevent Crime, Protect the Rights of the American People, and Enforce Federal Law**. Within this goal, CRS specifically addresses Strategic Objective 2.5— Promote and protect Americans' civil rights. CRS is known as the Department's "peacemaker" and is the only Federal component with this unique mission. CRS assists state and local government officials, law enforcement officers, community leaders, and others in resolving and preventing community-based conflicts and civil disorder around issues of race, color, and national origin and developing local capacity to prevent related community conflict and tensions. CRS also works to prevent and respond to alleged violent hate crimes on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability and decrease related community tensions. CRS's services assist willing parties in developing and implementing local strategies that can help law enforcement, local officials, community and faith-based organizations, civil rights organizations, and interested community groups respond to alleged hate crimes and find ways to prevent future incidents.

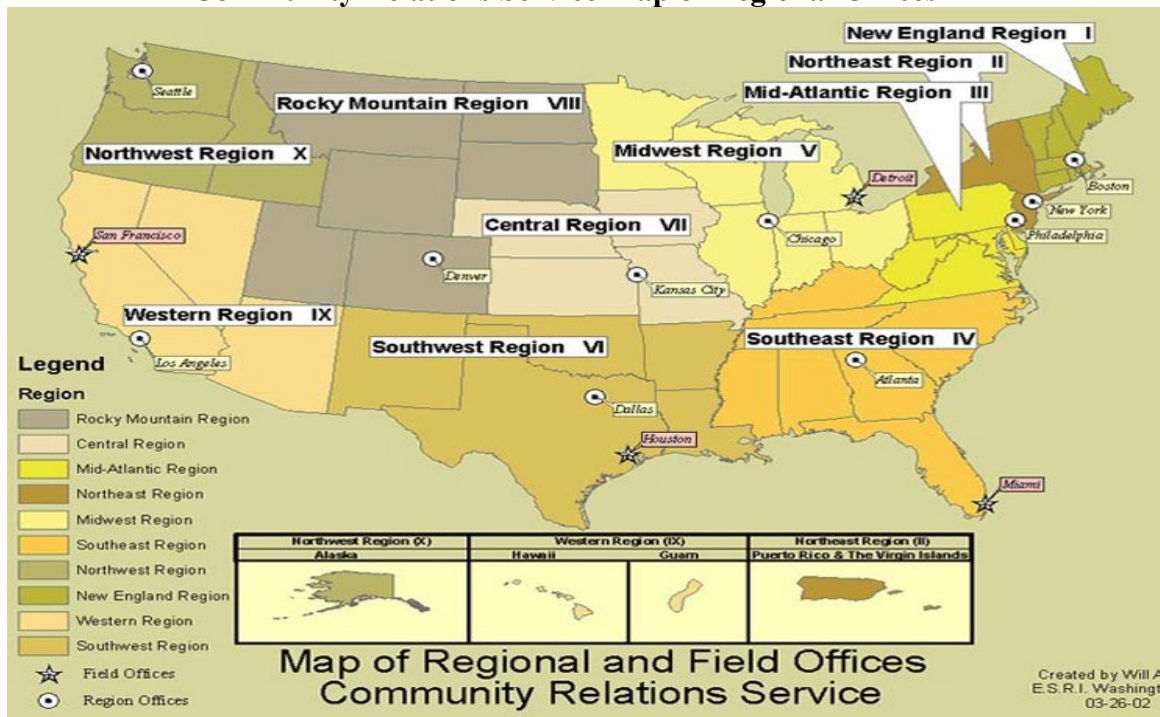
CRS provides four services to communities throughout the United States: 1) mediation, 2) facilitated dialogue, 3) training, and 4) consultation. By mandate, CRS' services are confidential, voluntary, and impartial (42 U.S.C. § 2000g). State and local law enforcement officials and community leaders may request CRS services to reduce tensions stemming from

hate crimes, hate incidents, and planned rallies and marches or to promote reconciliation after such events, as well as to improve communication between law enforcement and community members in the aftermath of a hate crime. CRS can provide facilitated dialogue between law enforcement and community members to increase mutual understanding about the investigative and prosecutorial process and increase public safety.

CRS services also address perceptions of discrimination, which can be as disruptive to community stability as actual discrimination. Specifically, CRS’s mediation and facilitated dialogue services provide a framework for parties to discuss perceptions of discrimination and issues impacting communities. These services also facilitate the development of partnerships and voluntary agreements to improve communication and trust, increase local capacity to prevent and respond to future conflicts, and improve public safety.

CRS does not have law enforcement authority, nor does it investigate or prosecute cases. As an impartial agency, CRS does not look to assign blame or fault to any individual or group. In contrast, CRS helps communities develop and implement their own solutions to reducing tensions. Furthermore, as alternatives to coercion or litigation, CRS facilitates the development of viable and voluntary solutions for resolution of community tension.

Community Relations Service Map of Regional Offices



CRS has 10 regional offices and 4 field offices in the following locations: Boston; New York; Philadelphia; Chicago (field office in Detroit); Kansas City, MO; Denver; Los Angeles (field office in San Francisco); Dallas (field office in Houston); Atlanta (field office in Miami); and Seattle.

Community Relations Service Programs and Services

The Community Relations Service staff work directly with community leaders, state and local officials, civil rights leaders, law enforcement agencies, school administrators, and other stakeholders to support their efforts to resolve community conflicts stemming from issues of race, color, national origin and to prevent or respond to violent hate crimes committed on the bases of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, and disability. As such, CRS's primary function is traveling to communities throughout the country and leading them through problem-solving processes. This is done through providing an array of services and employing dispute resolution practices that can generally be categorized as mediation, facilitated dialogue, training, and consultation.

Mediation- CRS mediation is a process where an impartial, and mutually acceptable, third-party facilitates dialogue and problem solving between stakeholders in conflict. The goal of mediation is to provide stakeholders with a framework to help them identify and analyze issues, clarify misunderstandings, establish trust, and develop voluntary agreements. Mediation is not used to determine which side is right or wrong. Rather, mediation is a voluntary and confidential structured process that is utilized in formal face-to-face negotiations between community stakeholders to facilitate stakeholder-generated, mutually-acceptable solutions. The issues and formal agreements in CRS mediation are as unique as each community engaged in the process. The issues vary from police-community relations, to tribal-border town conflict, to alleged disparate treatment in schools, to environmental justice issues. The formal agreements generally seek to improve communication and trust, develop partnerships, increase local capacity to prevent and respond to future conflicts, and improve public safety.

Facilitated Dialogue- CRS facilitated dialogue is a process that is less formal than mediation and is used to open lines of communication between parties. Like mediation, facilitated dialogue is confidential and voluntary. Through facilitated dialogue or meetings, stakeholders in conflict are able to listen to all sides of an issue and learn about varying perspectives and potential solutions. Facilitated dialogue can vary in approach and structure, from large community dialogues, to small meetings between key stakeholders, to information sharing between parties facilitated by an impartial third party. These dialogues often include various local agencies, institutions, and community members, and frequently address topics including police-community relations, alleged hate crimes, tribal conflicts, and protests and demonstrations. In most cases, facilitated dialogue is designed to assist stakeholders in identifying issues and developing voluntary, informal agreements that will not only improve communication and trust and develop partnerships, but will also increase local capacity to prevent and respond to future conflicts and improve public safety. CRS also can support the parties as they implement the actions they have identified to reduce tension, promote reconciliation, and improve communication going forward.

Training- Conciliation specialists deliver in-person and virtual training programs to communities experiencing tension to improve understanding and prevent future conflict. Developed using state-of-the-art adult learning best practices, these programs aim to improve law enforcement's and other audiences' understanding of diverse communities, help improve safety, build stakeholders' capacity to independently resolve conflict, and strengthen partnerships between stakeholders.

Consultation- CRS consultation services include technical assistance, such as the sharing of best practices around topics ranging from the formation of human relations commissions; to engaging with different ethnic and religious communities; to the development of safety protocols, communication channels, and contingency plans for large events.

CRS has developed numerous programs and trainings that not only assist communities in resolving their current conflicts, but also aid them in building the skills and infrastructure necessary to prevent and respond to future issues. The programs bring together representatives from local government agencies, community groups and faith-based organizations, law enforcement, civil rights groups, and businesses in order to develop collaborative approaches for reducing conflicts and addressing the factors that have contributed to the tension.

CRS' current facilitated problem-solving programs include:

- **Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP) Program:** The Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships program is an 8-hour facilitated dialogue session for improving public safety through proactive problem solving and police-community collaborations. These services can be requested in the aftermath of a hate crime or where local law enforcement or communities would like assistance reducing civil rights related tensions. Additionally, the program assists law enforcement and community leaders in developing action plans that address the most urgent issues impacting the community. First piloted in FY 2018, the well-received SPCP program is designed to strengthen the capacity of law enforcement and community leadership to address future conflicts, as well as increasing the community's willingness to report violent crimes, including hate crimes, and cooperate in the investigation of those crimes.
- **Dialogue on Race:** This program brings together diverse participants from the community to exchange information, share personal stories and experiences, express perspectives, clarify viewpoints, and develop understandings. Through the dialogue process, parties are able to identify commonalities and ways to work together to improve community relations. The program is also available for campuses and universities, using a model where CRS trains students to facilitate multiple dialogue sessions at their school.
- **School-Student Problem Identification & Resolution of Issues Together (School-SPIRIT):** The School-SPIRIT is an 8-hour student-directed, problem-solving program designed to assist student leaders in identifying issues impacting their school. These issues may include violence, bullying, and other school safety issues that are connected to civil rights-related concerns or perceptions. The program engages school administrators, teachers, school resource officers, and parents to develop customized action plans and solutions that address the most urgent issues impacting their school community, while increasing the ability of student leaders to address future conflicts. The program is also available for campuses and universities.
- **City-Problem Identification & Resolution of Issues Together (City-SPIRIT):** The City-SPIRIT is an 8-hour, facilitated problem-solving program designed to convene leaders from local government agencies, community leaders, faith-based organizations, law enforcement, and others to identify issues impacting community relations that are connected to civil rights-related concerns or perceptions. Through the program, the

parties develop customized action plans and voluntary agreements that address the most urgent issues in their community, while increasing the ability of community leaders to address future conflicts and improve partnerships, trust, and public safety.

CRS's educational programs that are focused on helping communities respond to hate crimes include:

- **Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum:** The Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum is a half-day program designed to provide law enforcement, business leaders, faith-based organizations, and community leaders with knowledge and information related to the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act (HCPA). Additionally, the program engages local law enforcement, district attorneys, and federal law enforcement in facilitated discussions to educate local communities about state and local laws and procedures to combat and respond to bias incidents and hate crimes.
- **Protecting Places of Worship (PPOW) Forum:** This half-day program offers best practices to help communities protect places of worship against potential threats. Government officials share guidelines for ensuring physical security and resources to develop security plans. PPOW forums convene local and federal law enforcement officials and faith-based organizations in a dialogue to provide information and resources related to hate crime laws, active shooters, and physical security at places of worship.

Finally, CRS's training programs include:

- **Engaging and Building Partnerships with Muslim and Sikh Americans:** The goals of these two half-day programs, both of which CRS updated in FY 2018, are to educate law enforcement about Muslim American and Sikh American communities. The program topics include: cultural understanding of Muslim and Sikh Americans; issues impacting these communities, including hate crimes; and best practices for successfully engaging with Muslim and Sikh Americans. The program includes action planning to increase local capacity to successfully create partnerships with Muslim and Sikh American communities and respond to issues impacting these communities.
- **Engaging and Building Partnerships with Transgender Communities Training:** This 4-hour program is designed to educate law enforcement about transgender communities. The program topics include: definitions related to the transgender community; the impacts of hate crimes on these communities; and best practices for engagement, communication, and problem solving. The program increases the capacity of law enforcement to successfully create partnerships with transgender communities and respond to issues impacting these communities.
- **Public Events Planning:** CRS's two public events-related training programs, Contingency Planning: Reducing Risk During Public Events and Event Marshals: Supporting Safety During Public Events trainings were updated in FY 2018. The Contingency Planning program increases participants' knowledge of how to plan for a safe public event, such as a demonstration or rally, to decrease the potential for violence. It also includes time for participants to begin developing an appropriate plan to prepare for and hold an event and assess and address potential issues for maintaining public safety during the event. The Event Marshals program educates participants about the

importance of this role in maintaining public safety during an event and expectations for Marshals as the primary points of contact with event participants.

- **Facilitating Meetings Around Community Conflict:** This daylong training is aimed at helping community leaders develop the skills needed to independently resolve community tensions, a key component of our focus on building local capacity to address sources of community conflict. Participants learn how to prepare for, facilitate, and conduct follow-up after a community meeting involving issues of conflict or disagreement.

FY 2022 Budget Request

The CRS budget consists of operating expenses which include, but are not limited to, payroll for permanent positions; travel expenses to enable CRS' conciliation professionals to respond in person to requests for assistance from state and local units of government, private and public organizations, and community groups; and funding for normal operations (e.g., programmatic planning and development, employee training and professional development, information technology, communications, equipment, supplies). In fiscal year 2022, the Community Relations Service (CRS) requests **70 positions, 60 FTE, and \$20,039,000**. This will allow CRS to support its current staffing level and 16 additional positions to expand mediation and conciliation services.

Performance Challenges

CRS is a small agency, with 54 staff and 54 FTE in FY 2021. As such, addressing the range of conflicts that develop throughout the country related to its jurisdictional mandates is challenging. Responding to cases that gain national attention, such as the death in police custody of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, in Minneapolis, Minnesota can impact CRS's ability to support communities working to address more localized conflicts. After his death, protests against excessive use of force by police and calls for police reform quickly spread across the country. CRS monitored the heightened racial community tensions and unrest in hundreds of cities around the country, responding to as many community leaders' requests for assistance as possible. Most years, it is not uncommon to have the majority of the staff actively deployed to support communities at any given time, although the conciliators seamlessly pivoted to provide virtual services during the COVID-19 pandemic. CRS conciliation specialists sprang into action in response to the occurrence of bias incidents and hate crimes against Asian and Pacific Islander Americans due to COVID-19-related misinformation and concerns of disparate access to health services related to COVID-19 for Black and other vulnerable communities, forming working groups to virtually monitor incidents, coordinate action, and share information. Whether in-person or virtually, CRS cannot respond to all of its potential cases, but has to strategically prioritize where its services will have the most impact. CRS also must balance the time staff spend on case deployment with the need to allot time to develop and train staff on new and emerging issues and approaches to leading communities through resolution processes related to specific and persistent types of conflicts.

CRS tracks the number of jurisdictional incidents that occur where CRS does not have staff available to reach out to the affected communities to offer services. During the first six months of FY 2020, from October 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020, CRS documented 92 such incidents. However, the number of these documented incidents then rapidly rose, with over 550 incidents

documented in the third and fourth quarters of FY 2020 - a 500% increase from the first to the second halves of the year.

With the passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act (P.L. 111-84, 2009) (“Hate Crimes Protection Act”), CRS dramatically expanded the scope of its mission. CRS transformed from an agency focused on addressing and preventing conflict and violence related to discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin to an agency that is also responsible for helping communities prevent and respond to violent hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and disability (in addition to race, color, and national origin). The component has vigorously embraced its broadened mandate.

CRS continues to assess its daily operations based on requests for services, hate crime and other statistics, Administration priorities, and opportunity for local capacity building. All of these factors pose challenges that affect the success of CRS’s conciliation and mediation services.

Internal Challenges

The primary internal challenges facing CRS are: strategic use of resources, strategic use of technology, and strategic human capital planning.

Strategic use of resources. CRS will continue to deploy its resources consistent with the Administration’s strategic priorities, including preventing and responding to hate crimes and promoting and protecting Americans’ civil rights. CRS also will continue to focus on building communities’ capacities to work to reduce tensions and respond to and prevent hate crimes and hate incidents.

Strategic use of technology. CRS will continue to focus its internal efforts on leveraging technology to enable virtual meetings, trainings, and forums; ensure staff have efficient access to policies and Standard Operating Procedures; provide web-based access to best practices and other tools; and reduce travel costs, where possible.

Strategic human capital planning. Finally, CRS will take steps to ensure that the agency maintains a world-class diverse workforce, including a cadre of highly-skilled, high performing, engaged mediators and conciliators who enable CRS to accomplish its mission efficiently and effectively. CRS will address its human capital needs through effective succession planning, professional development, and sustained high-quality training. High quality standards for leadership, in-service training, standardized measurable work plans, and employee engagement action plans will remain crucial to aspects of CRS’ strategy to address internal and external challenges.

External Challenges

The primary external challenges facing CRS are: the increase in reported hate crime incidents; the recent spike in racial tensions resulting from protests against excessive use of force by police and calls for police reform; the increase in community interest in preventative services; and the constancy of government turnover.

Increase in reported hate crime incidents. CRS will continue to respond to a wide range of conflicts, including those stemming from race, national origin, gender identity, religion, and tribal issues, which all remain present at high levels and are equally in need of CRS services. CRS designated a conciliation specialist to coordinate the agency's response to the recent rise in the number of bias incidents and hate crimes against Asian American and Pacific Islanders. The 2019 Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) Hate Crime Statistics Report, the most recent hate crimes statistics available from the FBI, reflects the increase in demand for services that CRS is seeing in communities across the country. According to the FBI's Report, there was an increase in reported hate crime incidents from 7,120 in 2018 to 7,314 in 2019.

Spike in racial tensions resulting from protests and calls for police reform. Since May 25, 2020, CRS has only been able to offer support to a fraction of the communities where protests against excessive use of force by police and calls for police reform have occurred or are planned. CRS is on site before and during these events, as resources allow. Just as importantly, CRS can support communities in the aftermath of these events, as the affected groups work to heal and implement reconciliation plans. However, with a small staff, CRS cannot support all the requests for services it receives.

Increase in community interest in preventative services. Additionally, officials reach out to CRS from numerous cities that are interested in proactively engaging their communities in the type of collaborative problem solving processes that CRS facilitates before a major conflict arises. Yet, engaging preventatively before there is unrest while maintaining the capacity, with a small staff, to respond to and serve cities that are facing unrest is challenging.

Government turnover. Finally, CRS must constantly reintroduce its services to community and local government leaders due to newly-elected officials and a statutory mandate that prevents the Agency from publicizing the details of much of its work. Furthermore, many of the people and communities CRS can serve pursuant to the Hate Crimes Prevention Act are still not familiar with CRS services because they did not fall under CRS jurisdiction before passage of the Act in 2009. For example, communities who may be targeted for violent hate crimes on the basis of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability may not have worked with CRS in the past when its jurisdiction was focused on addressing racial tension.

Despite these challenges, CRS is not deterred from offering its services to communities in need. Through skillful conciliation and mediation, CRS's services can limit disruptions to community peace and stability, and the increase requested in the 2022 Budget would extend those services. For any jurisdictional conflict, CRS stands ready to offer its conflict resolution services to communities across the United States.

II. Summary of Program Changes

Item Name	Description			Page	
		Pos.	FTE		Dollars (\$000)
Mediation and Conciliation Services	This increase will allow CRS to expand its mediation and conciliation services to communities.	16	8	1,758	7

III. Appropriations Language and Analysis of Appropriation Language

SALARIES AND EXPENSES, COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE

Appropriations Language

COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE (INCLUDING TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

For necessary expenses of the Community Relations Service, [\$18,000,000] \$20,039,000: *Provided*, That notwithstanding section 205 of this act, upon a determination by the Attorney General that emergent circumstances require additional funding for conflict resolution and violence prevention activities of the Community Relations Service, the Attorney General may transfer such amounts to the Community Relations Services, from available appropriations for the current fiscal year for the Department of Justice, as may be necessary to respond to such circumstances: *Provided further*, That any transfer pursuant to the proceeding proviso shall be treated as a reprogramming under section [505] 504 of this Act and shall not be available for obligation or expenditure except in compliance with the procedures set forth in that section.

Analysis of Appropriations Language

There are no substantive changes proposed.

IV. Program Activity Justification

A. Community Relations Service

<i>Conflict Resolution & Violence Prevention Activities</i>	Direct Pos.	Estimate FTE	Amount
2020 Enacted	54	29	16,000,000
2021 Enacted	54	54	18,000,000
Adjustments to Base and Technical Adjustments			281,000
2022 Current Services	54	54	18,281,000

2022 Program Changes	16	8	1,758,000
2022 Request	70	62	20,039,000
Total Change 2021-2022	16	8	2,039,000

1. Program Description

CRS’ programs contribute to the **DOJ’s Strategic Goal #3 –Reduce Violent Crime and Promote Public Safety**. Within this goal, CRS specifically addresses Strategic Objective 2.5 Promote and protect Americans’ civil rights.

CRS has implemented several strategies to effectively address the issues of discriminatory practices based on race, color, or national origin, and work with communities to help prevent and respond to violent hate crimes on the basis of actual or perceived gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. CRS conducts training with federal, state, and local law enforcement to share best practices for successful interactions between law enforcement officials and community members. In FY 2020, CRS modified three in-person training programs and its Hate Crimes Forum structure for virtual delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic. CRS also updated its guides for planning and conducting Dialogue on Race, City/School Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (City/School SPIRIT) facilitated dialogue sessions and developed a new guide for its Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships program.

Recognizing the importance of receiving feedback from stakeholders to help continually improve services, CRS solicits participant comments at the end of facilitated dialogue and training sessions. For example, in FY 2020, survey data indicated that 94% of respondents found the CRS training that they had attended to be interactive and engaging, with 95% indicating that the training was a worthwhile use of their time. In addition, in FY 2021, CRS launched a new initiative to document the broader outcomes of its work with communities, including the extent to which stakeholders perceive that tensions decreased, police-community relations improved, and local capacity increased to independently resolve future conflicts. The results of its first outcome evaluation, which is examining the effects of a Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships facilitated dialogue program conducted in 2018, began in spring 2021. Results are expected by late summer 2021.

Making information about CRS services and programs easily available to the public continues to be a priority for CRS. In FY 2020 alone, the CRS website had more than 32,000 visitors and more than 73,000 page views. In FY 2021, CRS launched a Spanish-language version of its website. Moreover, CRS broadened the ability of its diverse community groups to access information about CRS’s services and programs by translating key documents available to stakeholders on its website into 12 languages, including Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Korean, Punjabi, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

In preparation for growth in FYs 2021 and potentially 2022, CRS intensified its emphasis on staff development and training of staff on the fundamental skills of conflict resolution, developing and piloting a comprehensive training program for new conciliators to equip them with an understanding of CRS’s core mission, mandates, services, programs, and approach to outreach and service delivery. The training includes a self-paced workbook designed to be completed over a two-month period and 32 hours of instructor-led interactive classes. CRS also

holds staff training sessions to develop leadership skills and enhance and refresh contemporary conflict resolution strategies and skills, with an internal skills certification process for fundamental tools that are used in conflict resolution cases. The Agency continues to strengthen its emphasis on local capacity building by having conciliators focus on the implementation of collaborative partnerships, action planning, and other mechanisms for strategically empowering and sustaining peaceful communities.

The services of CRS are tracked in a case management database system. Quality assurance is measured by a weekly review of every new case in the CRS system and a quarterly performance review of case statistics to identify and discuss trends. Conciliators have made significant qualitative and technical progress on casework. Updated Performance Work Plans emphasize community capacity building outcomes.

2. Performance, Resources, and Strategies

a. Performance Plan and Report for Outcomes

CRS provides conflict resolution services to resolve disputes and disagreements based on race, color and national origin in order to reduce community tension. A significant portion of CRS' workload is direct crisis response services. Outreach efforts, where CRS works to develop relationships with stakeholders and help them to strengthen their local capacity to prevent and respond to tensions and conflicts, account for another significant portion of the work conducted by staff. CRS also prevents and responds to alleged hate crimes committed on the basis of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability in addition to race, color, and national origin. FY 2020 targets mirror these targets, consistent with the current state of operations budget request. In addition, CRS has revised the FY 2019 targets for the trainings and mediation performance measures to mirror the FY 2020 targets, consistent with the current state of operations budget request.

b. Strategies to Accomplish Outcomes

CRS strategies include providing conflict resolution services to accomplish the outcomes. These conciliation services include mediation, facilitation, training, and consulting. CRS trainings and programs include Engaging and Building Relations with Muslim and Sikh Communities, Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships, Hate Crime Forums, Protecting Places of Worship forums, Dialogue on Race, and the City/School Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (City/School SPIRIT) program.

These strategies are specifically designed to assist states, local communities, and tribal governments in resolving violence and conflict. CRS has been working collaboratively with four major customer groups: (1) investigative and law enforcement agencies; (2) state, local, and tribal governments, and federal agencies, including U.S. Attorneys, FBI, various other components of the Department of Justice, Department of Labor, Department of the Interior, Department of Homeland Security Transportation Security Administration, Department of Education, and domestic immigration officials; (3) schools, colleges, and universities; and (4) community groups and other organizations to assist and resolve racial conflict and to help communities develop the ability to more effectively prevent and respond to alleged violent hate crimes on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.

CRS develops strategies that focus on bringing together the energy of community leaders, organizations, and citizens to work towards crime prevention and providing safe neighborhoods and communities for all Americans through cooperation and coordination with other Department of Justice components. CRS does not investigate or prosecute. Rather, CRS provides comprehensive services that empower communities to help themselves and maximize the federal investment at the local level through capacity building. It does so with confidentiality and with impartiality. By facilitating dialogue, mediating agreements, providing technical assistance, and increasing cultural understanding, CRS conducts services in response to conflicts or incidents that, left unaddressed, might escalate to violent hate crimes.

To serve all the different jurisdictional areas, including the ones mandated by the 2009 Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Prevention Act, CRS must continue to monitor hate crimes, conduct outreach work, and provide services. Given continuing technology innovations and the need to serve tech-savvy youth, CRS continues to utilize different technology platforms to meet its mandate, including sharing information through its social media platforms. CRS also continues to utilize and develop cutting edge conflict resolution approaches to meet the changing needs of the communities we serve.

In order to fulfill the strategic goals of the Agency, the CRS management team will continue to conduct robust strategic planning that includes actions to ensure that staff have contemporary mediation and conciliation skills, use cutting edge conflict resolution tools, facilitate educational programs that incorporate adult learning best practices, and provide up-to-date technical assistance. In addition, CRS leadership will continue to allocate resources to obtain maximum mission accomplishment in the most efficient and effective manner, conduct stakeholder engagement and outreach activities to make sure that CRS programs meet current needs, evaluate trainings and other programmatic offerings to ensure they meet program goals, hold staff accountable through adherence to clear performance work plans, promote employee engagement, and follow a transparent merit award system for outstanding work. CRS's success can be evaluated on how well its services assist communities in need, contributing to the Department's Conflict Resolution and Violence Prevention Activities. In addition, CRS is gauged on its success in keeping the peace in cities throughout the country when events occur that have the potential to escalate into major riots or violence. CRS continues to evaluate new methods for measuring the Agency's success, always aiming to improve upon its service delivery to American communities.

VI. Program Increase

Item Name:	CRS Operations at Steady State
Budget Decision Unit(s):	Conflict Resolution & Violence Prevention Activities
Organizational Program:	Community Relations Service
Component Ranking of Item:	1 of 1
Program Increase: Positions: <u>16</u> Agt/Atty: <u>0</u> FTE: <u>8</u> Dollars: <u>\$1,758,000</u>	

Description of Item

The President's Budget requests funding to increase CRS to a total funding level of 70 positions, 62 FTE, and \$20,039,000 for CRS in FY 2022.

Summary Justification

Following the death in police custody of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, protests against excessive use of force by police and calls for police reform quickly spread across the country. CRS monitored the heightened racial community tensions and unrest in hundreds of cities around the country, responding to as many community leaders' requests for assistance as possible. This increase in resources will enable CRS to respond to an additional number of stakeholder requests to support peaceful protests, improve police-community relations, including with youth groups, and address sources of systemic inequality. These additional resources also will strengthen CRS's capacity to support communities across the United States working to prevent and respond to bias incidents and hate crimes, including those against Asian American and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) communities or committed on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation.

In FY 2020, CRS documented 753 jurisdictional incidents that occurred where CRS did not have staff available to reach out to the affected communities to offer services, with a 500% increase in the number of such incidents from the first to the second halves of the year (92 to 567). These additional resources will enable CRS to respond to incidents that otherwise might go unaddressed, potentially escalating into higher tension levels, with increased likelihood of violence.

These additional resources also will allow CRS to expand its program evaluation initiative to continue documenting the broader outcomes of its work with communities, including the extent to which stakeholders perceive that tensions decreased, police-community relations improved, and local capacity increased to independently resolve future conflicts after CRS conducted a training or facilitated dialogue program in the community. It is critical for CRS to evaluate the outcomes of its programs to allow it to improve its services to stakeholders and ensure it is accomplishing its mission as "America's Peacemaker" in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

VII. Exhibits