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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4606

July 16, 2020

Greetings,

On December 31, 2018, President Trump signed the Ashanti Alert Act of 2018 (Pub L. 115-401) into law. The Ashanti Alert Act requires the Department of Justice (DOJ) to establish a national communications network, named the Ashanti Alert, to assist regional and local search efforts for certain missing adults. This life-saving law closes a gap between our existing missing person alert systems, like Amber and Silver Alerts.

The Ashanti Alert is named for Ashanti Billie, a 19-year-old who was abducted in Norfolk, Virginia and whose body was discovered 11 days after she was first reported missing. Because Ashanti was 19, she was too old for an Amber Alert and no similar network existed for adults at the time. As a result, her parents, family, and friends struggled to get word out of her disappearance in a timely fashion.

Ashanti's story is all too familiar and as a result, Virginia passed its own version of the Ashanti Alert into law in early 2018. Just three months later, the Commonwealth had implemented the Critically Missing Adult Notification system.

Because of Virginia's success in standing up the Ashanti Alert, the Department of Justice has consulted with Virginia officials on best practices for implementing a notification system for missing adults as it implements the national Ashanti Alert system and begins to launch the Ashanti Alert Act's pilot program. As part of this launch, the Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Affairs will hold an Ashanti Alert Act Webinar on July 23, 2020. Amber Alert and Silver Alert coordinators across the country have been invited to attend.

We wholeheartedly encourage your states and localities to participate in this life-saving Ashanti Alert program. We stand ready to answer questions or provide assistance and advice about implementing these critical alert systems. You will find information about the webinar here: <https://bja.ojp.gov/news/learn-about-ashanti-alert-act-pilot-project-upcoming-webinar>. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact my State Director, Lou Kadiri, at [lou\\_kadiri@warner.senate.gov](mailto:lou_kadiri@warner.senate.gov). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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