

April 14, 2023

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Chair
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States Senate
506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States Senate
521 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
2406 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Matt Cartwright
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Commerce, Justice, Science & Related Agencies
United States House of Representatives
2102 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Shaheen, Ranking Member Moran, Chair Rogers and Ranking Member Cartwright:

Our diverse organizations represent state and local groups, law enforcement officers, judges, court personnel, corrections officers and leaders, policymakers, faith-based leaders, substance use and mental health professionals, and impacted individuals and families. We have come together because we represent constituencies working to increase public safety by improving reentry from prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities. We write to express our support for funding of the Second Chance Act in fiscal year 2024.

At the end of 2020, federal, state, and local correctional facilities held more than 1.6 million people.¹ This amounted to nearly 1 in every 150 adult U.S. residents. Unfortunately, most individuals face numerous challenges when returning to the community from prison, and research has suggested that as many as 40 percent of people released from prison are reincarcerated. As you know, the Second Chance Act is a common-sense, evidence-based approach to improving public safety. State and local governments as well as non-profit organizations need resources in order to ensure that the millions of individuals returning from prison, jail, and juvenile facilities each year continue to receive coordinated evidence-based reentry services that will increase public safety. These grants will provide crucial resources at a time when they are desperately needed.

The Second Chance Act, which passed with overwhelming bipartisan support and was signed into law in April 2008, and reauthorized as part of the landmark First Step Act, is a common sense, evidence-based approach to reducing crime and improving public safety. The bill authorizes federal grants for programs that will improve coordination of reentry services and policies at the state, tribal, and local levels, including demonstration grants, reentry courts, family-centered programs, substance abuse treatment,

¹ Rich Kluckow and Zhen Zeng, *Correctional Populations in the United States, 2020—Statistical Tables* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2022), available at bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus20st.pdf.

employment, mentoring and other services needed to improve transition from prison and jail to communities and reduce recidivism.

Over 1000 Second Chance grants have been awarded to community and faith-based organizations as well as state, local and tribal governments spanning almost every state in the country. The Second Chance Act has fueled the public/private partnerships that are required to tackle the complex task of reducing recidivism. In addition, it supports the Crisis Stabilization and Community Reentry Program, which provides funding to state, local and tribal governments, as well as community-based nonprofit organizations, to enhance or implement clinical services and other evidence-based responses to improve reentry, reduce recidivism and address the treatment and recovery needs of people with mental health, substance use or co-occurring disorders who are currently or were formerly involved in the criminal justice system.

The program also supports the recently launched [Reentry 2030](#), a national initiative to achieve better and more equitable reentry and reintegration outcomes by engaging states to adopt public, ambitious goals that drive system change. Reentry 2030 is a partnership between the Correctional Leaders Association, the Council of State Governments Justice Center, and JustLeadershipUSA.

Congress has made it increasingly clear there is bipartisan interest in affording people who have been involved with the justice system with second chances. By providing the resources needed to coordinate reentry services and policies, the Second Chance Act ensures that the tax dollars spent on corrections no longer support a revolving door in and out of prison and jail. State, local, and tribal governments, and nonprofit organizations around the country are eager to launch and expand innovative reentry programs, and families and communities are desperate to access the services the Second Chance Act will provide.

Please support full funding for Second Chance Act programs in FY2024.

Sincerely,

American Jail Association
American Probation and Parole Association (APPA)
Center for Employment Opportunities
Church World Service
Coalition for Juvenile Justice
Coalition on Human Needs
Correctional Leaders Association
Council of State Governments Justice Center
CURE (Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants)
Faces & Voices of Recovery
Major County Sheriffs of America
National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
National Association of Counties (NACo)
National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD)
National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors
National Council of Churches
National District Attorneys Association
National Juvenile Justice Network

National League of Cities
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Opportunity Youth United
R Street Institute
Safer Foundation
StoptheDrugWar.org
TASC, Inc. (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities)
The NYC Justice Peer Initiative
Treatment Communities of America
Underground Scholars Initiative
Vera Institute of Justice