

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 11, 2018

The Honorable Jerry Moran  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related  
Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related  
Agencies  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Moran and Ranking Member Shaheen:

Thank you for your continued commitment to programs across the United States working to improve reentry, reduce recidivism and improve public safety through the Second Chance Act. 2018 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Second Chance Act, and we urge your continued support for these programs in the FY 2019 Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Act.

At the end of 2015, federal, state, and local correctional facilities held close to 2.2 million people. This amounted to nearly one in every 200 residents. Unfortunately, most individuals face numerous challenges when returning to the community from prison, and research suggests 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. These grants will provide crucial resources at a time when they are desperately needed. Below are examples of how states have utilized these funds:

- After a 40-percent increase over 10 years, recidivism in **Alabama** decreased: the recidivism rate for 2013 releases was 31.9 percent, compared to 34 percent for 2008 releases.<sup>1</sup> Eight Second Chance grants have gone to state and county agencies and nonprofit organizations in the state, including the Alabama Board of Pardons and Paroles, which piloted a day reporting center, a non-residential treatment facility designed to offer aid to medium- to high-risk individuals under probation or parole supervision in the Jefferson County area. Services include substance use treatment, cognitive behavioral therapy, education, and assistance with employment. The center aims to reduce recidivism through the use of evidence-based programming to help individuals thrive after release.
- The **Texas** Juvenile Justice Department's Second Chance Act-funded program provides family-focused reentry services to gang-affiliated youth, ages 13–19. According to a study of past program participants, approximately 80 percent had not been rearrested within 20 weeks of release, compared to 70 percent of the youth in a comparison group.<sup>2</sup> In Fort Worth, participants of Pathfinders' Second Chance-funded mentoring program have recidivated at lower rates than

---

<sup>1</sup> Alabama Department of Corrections, *Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2016* (Montgomery: Alabama Department of Corrections, 2017), available at [www.doc.alabama.gov/docs/AnnualRpts/2016AnnualReport.pdf](http://www.doc.alabama.gov/docs/AnnualRpts/2016AnnualReport.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Kathleen A. Fox, Vincent J. Webb, Alejandro Ferrer, Charles M. Katz, and Eric Hedberg, *Gang Intervention Treatment Re-Entry Development for Youth (GITREDY): A Report on the First Year of Implementation* (Huntsville, TX: Sam Houston State University, 2012).



participants of previous programs.<sup>3</sup> Santa Maria Hostel's Path to Recovery Program in Harris County, which provides mentoring services to formerly incarcerated women, also reported that between 2013 and 2015, 82 percent of program participants had no record of reoffending of any kind.<sup>4</sup> In total, Texas agencies and organizations have received 38 Second Chance grants.

- In **New York**, which has received 46 Second Chance grants, the Harlem Parole Reentry Court in New York City emphasizes job readiness and the use of a risk assessment tool to determine individuals' risk levels and needs. An evaluation showed a 22-percent reduction in reconviction rates, 60-percent reduction in felony rates, and 45-percent reduction in revocations when comparing participants to a control group after an 18-month follow-up period.<sup>5</sup> Findings from one-year follow-up interviews indicated additional positive outcomes—participants were significantly less likely to use drugs and more likely to be in school or employed, have positive perceptions of their parole officer, and report that they were treated respectfully and fairly. To reduce juvenile delinquency and support youth under community supervision, the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services leads the Upstate Juvenile Community Supervision Project and partners with Kids Oneida, a nonprofit with extensive experience facilitating cross-system collaboration, developing and leading evidence-based juvenile reentry programs grounded in best practices, and engaging state, regional and local stakeholders in reforms across Upstate New York.
- In **Pennsylvania**, the Allegheny County Reentry Initiative links sentenced individuals with service coordination, education, job readiness, treatment, family supports, and other services at least five months prior to release. Service providers assess the risk and need of every individual during his or her first 30 days in jail and collaborate with jail staff to direct individuals to needed in-jail services and treatments. An evaluation conducted by the Urban Institute found that the program had reduced re-arrest rates among participants by more than 50 percent.<sup>6</sup> Pennsylvania has received a total of 33 Second Chance grants.
- In **Kentucky**, Louisville-Jefferson County's program for people with co-occurring substance use and mental disorders includes developing a more comprehensive transition from the jail into community-based services, as well as an enhanced screening and assessment process for potential program participants that utilizes evidence-based tools. Seven Counties Services' Recovery Zone will provide a centralized location for comprehensive and prompt community-based services, which include evidence-based interventions such as Integrated Dual Diagnosis Treatment, Moral Reconciliation Therapy, and computer-assisted cognitive behavioral treatment.

---

<sup>3</sup> Council of State Governments Justice Center, "Second Chance Act Grantee Achieves Dramatic Results for High-Risk Women," February 17, 2016, available at [csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/posts/sca-grantee-achieves-dramatic-results-for-high-risk-women/](http://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/posts/sca-grantee-achieves-dramatic-results-for-high-risk-women/).

<sup>4</sup> Council of State Governments Justice Center, "Second Chance Act Program Spotlight: Paths to Recovery, Santa Maria Hostel—Harris County, Texas," September 21, 2017, available at [csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/posts/second-chance-act-program-spotlight-paths-to-recovery-santa-maria-hostel-harris-county-texas/](http://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/posts/second-chance-act-program-spotlight-paths-to-recovery-santa-maria-hostel-harris-county-texas/).

<sup>5</sup> Lama Hassoun Ayoub and Tia Pooler, *Coming Home to Harlem: A Randomized Controlled Trial of the Harlem Parole Reentry Court* (New York: Center for Court Innovation, 2015), available at [courtinnovation.org/sites/default/files/documents/Harlem%20Final%20Report%20-%20June.pdf](http://courtinnovation.org/sites/default/files/documents/Harlem%20Final%20Report%20-%20June.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Janeen Buck Willison, Sam G. Bieler, and KiDeuk Kim, *Evaluation of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative Reentry Programs* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2014), available at [www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/33641/413252-Evaluation-of-the-Allegheny-County-Jail-Collaborative-Reentry-Programs.PDF](http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/33641/413252-Evaluation-of-the-Allegheny-County-Jail-Collaborative-Reentry-Programs.PDF).

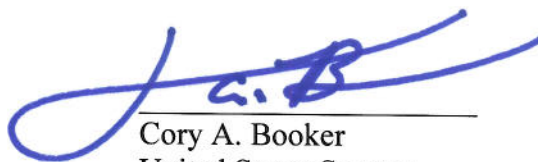
The Second Chance Act, which passed with overwhelming bipartisan support and was signed into law in April 2008, authorized \$165 million for programs that will improve coordination of reentry services and policies for adults and youth at the state and local levels. These programs provide a range of services, including employment assistance, substance use and mental health treatment, housing, family-centered programming and mentoring, and other evidence-based reentry programs.

State and local governments and nonprofit organizations around the country are eager to launch innovative reentry programs, and families and communities are desperate to access the services the Second Chance Act will provide. We urge your continued support for funding for this important program in FY 2019.

Sincerely,



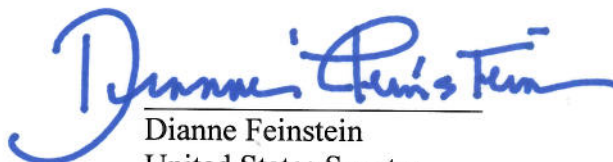
Rob Portman  
United States Senator



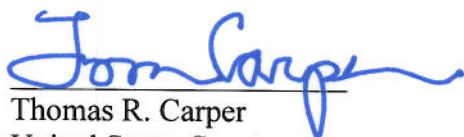
Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



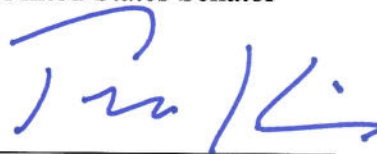
Brian Schatz  
United States Senator



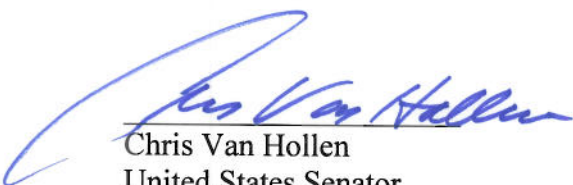
Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



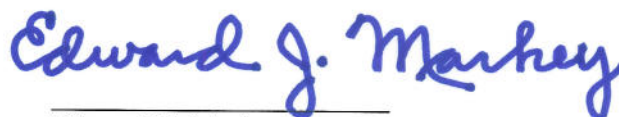
Thomas R. Carper  
United States Senator



Tim Kaine  
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator

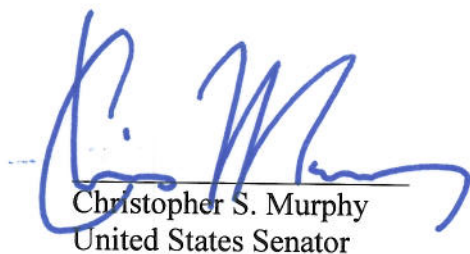


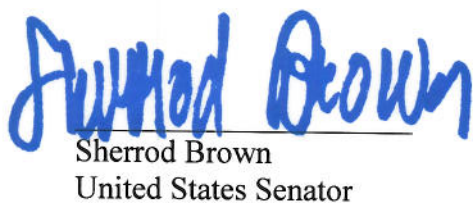
Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator

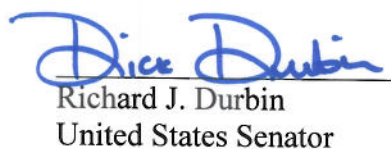


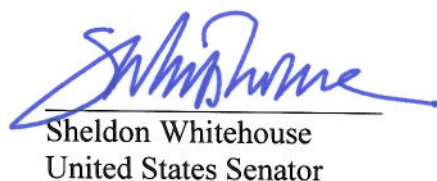
Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator



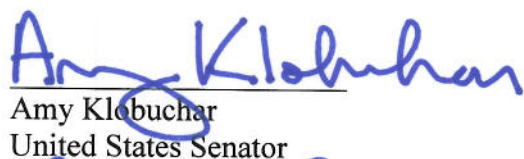
  
Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator

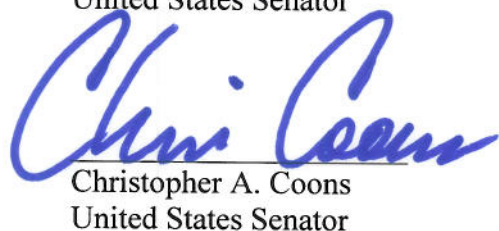
  
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator

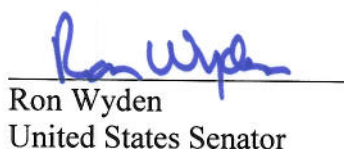
  
Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

  
Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator

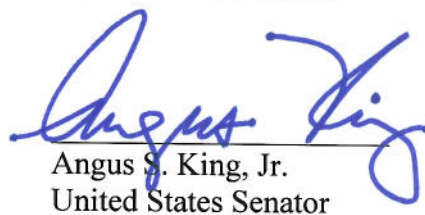
  
Robert Menendez  
United States Senator

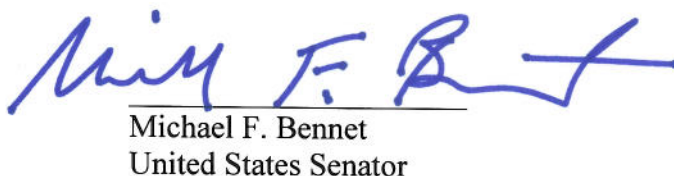
  
Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator

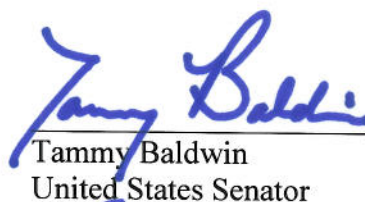
  
Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator

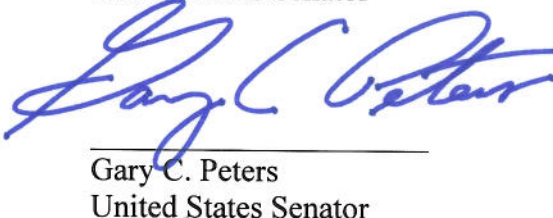
  
Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

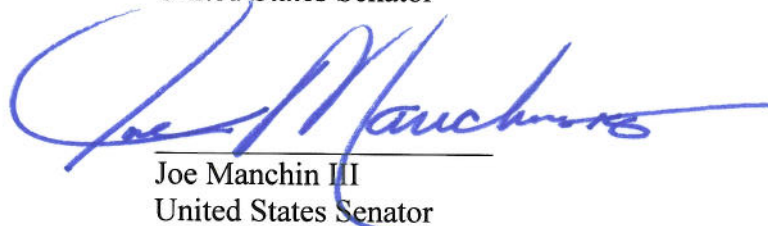
  
Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator

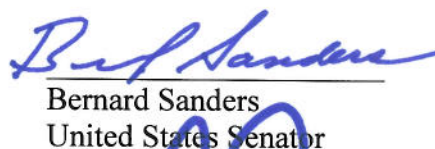
  
Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator

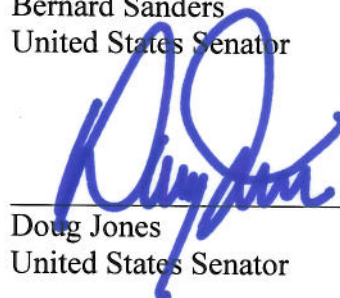
  
Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator

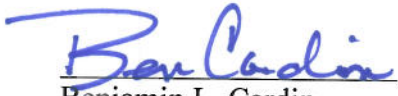
  
Tammy Baldwin  
United States Senator

  
Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

  
Joe Manchin III  
United States Senator

  
Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator

  
Doug Jones  
United States Senator

  
Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator