

October 2015 Action:

Ask your House Member to Support Speaker Boehner in Bringing a Package of Criminal Justice Reforms to the Floor for a Vote

- House Speaker John Boehner will retire at the end of this month
- He still has time (just barely) to bring a powerful package of criminal justice reforms – with bi-partisan support – out of committee and to the House floor
- The Senate Criminal Justice Reform Bill introduced on October 1st shows there is a rare bi-partisan opportunity around this issue

You can be instrumental in seizing this rare political moment, by urging your House Member to contact Speaker Boehner, and support him in bringing this package of bills (named below) to the floor.

Congressional Switchboard Number: (202) 224-3121
(then you can ask for your House Member by name)

“The Package” – In Brief

Youth PROMISE Act – HR 2197

Supports locally chosen effective programs for reducing youth violence and incarceration.

SAFE Justice Reinvestment Act – HR 2944

Increases evidence-based sentencing alternatives, reduces mandatory minimum sentencing, and improves probation practices for optimal reintegration into society.

Second Chance Act (reauthorization) – HR 3406

Evidence-based reentry programs – proven to reduce recidivism.

Smarter Sentencing Act – HR 920

Reduces mandatory minimums for low-risk offenders.

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP Act) (reauthorization) – HR 2728 (AKA “Youth Justice Act”)

Updates Landmark 1974 legislation that established standards for treatment of incarcerated youth.

A Bit More Detail

SAFE Justice Act: The SAFE Justice Act is the product of a two year long bipartisan process led by Representatives Jim Sensenbrenner and Bobby Scott to create a broad and comprehensive reform of the criminal justice system. It would reduce the number of federal crimes, allow judges to push back on charges from crimes stemming from police manipulation of behavior, increase use of evidence based sentencing alternatives, reduce sentences - allowing judges and defendants relief from mandatory minimums, and reform probation to make it more supportive and less punitive - helping people reintegrate into the community.

Second Chance Reauthorization Act: The Second Chance Act was first passed in 2007, and has used evidence based reentry programs to help those returning from incarceration reintegrate into the community. It has reduced recidivism and saved significant amounts of money.

Youth PROMISE Act: The Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunity, Mentoring, Intervention, Support and Education (Youth PROMISE) Act would reduce youth violence and incarceration by enabling inclusive groups of local stakeholders to determine the needs of their own communities and to address those needs with a suite of accountable, evidence based programs. It is locally controlled, accountable, saves money, and it works.

Smarter Sentencing Act: The Smarter Sentencing Act would reduce a variety of mandatory minimums to reduce unjustifiable disparities in sentencing and to reduce sentences for low risk offenders.

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Reauthorization: First passed in 1974, the JJDPA is the only federal statute that sets out national standards for the custody and care of youth in the juvenile justice system and provides direction and support for state juvenile justice system improvements. It is an important law that is long overdue for a Congressional update. We now have a decade of evidence that treatment-focused, community-based approaches work—they are cost-effective and result in better outcomes for kids and communities. (Credit to Act4JJ and the Coalition for Juvenile Justice for this description)