



## **The Second Chance Act 2008 Information Packet**

This packet includes a brief description and update on the Second Chance Act ([P.L. 110-199](#)) and sample letters you can use to urge your members of Congress to fund the Second Chance Act.

### **Background**

The Second Chance Act is a common sense response to improve outcomes for people released from prisons and jails and returning to our communities. Each year, nearly 670,000 people are released from state prisons and approximately 9 million are released from jails. A 2002 study by the Bureau of Justice Statistics estimated more than two-thirds of individuals released from prisons in 1994 were rearrested for a new offense within three years and more than 50 percent returned for committing new crimes or for violating their conditions of supervision. And at least 95 percent of the individuals now in prison will be released and will return to communities, often without assistance or services.

### **Update**

On April 9, 2008, President Bush signed the Second Chance Act into law. Both the House and the Senate provided funding for Second Chance Act programs in their draft appropriations bills for fiscal year 2009, but they failed to pass those bills before the start of FY09 on October 1, 2008. Instead, Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) which provides no funding for new programs, including the Second Chance Act. The current CR funds the federal government through March 6, 2009, so Congress will have to pass another appropriations bill before March to fund the federal government through the remainder of FY09. When Congress returns after the election, the Justice Center will urge members of Congress to provide funding for the Second Chance Act in fiscal year 2009, as well as fiscal year 2010.

## **Take Action**

- 1. Contact members of the House and Senate Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations Subcommittee to ask them to support \$45 million for Second Chance Act programs in FY09.**

To send an email to the members of the subcommittee, click on their names below. NOTE: Some members will only accept email from their constituents, so you will have to enter a ZIP code in their district in order to use their webform to contact them. For those members with direct email addresses, clicking on the name will open a new email message to that member.

<i>Senate CJS Subcommittee:</i>	<i>House CJS Subcommittee:</i>
<a href="#">Barbara Mikulski, Chair (D-MD)</a> <a href="#">Daniel Inouye (D-HI)</a> <a href="#">Patrick Leahy (D-VT)</a> <a href="#">Herb Kohl (D-WI)</a> <a href="#">Tom Harkin (D-IA)</a> <a href="#">Byron Dorgan (D-ND)</a> <a href="#">Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)</a> <a href="#">Jack Reed (D-RI)</a> <a href="#">Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ)</a>  <a href="#">Richard Shelby, Ranking Member (R-AL)</a> <a href="#">Judd Gregg (R-NH)</a> <a href="#">Ted Stevens (R-AK)</a> <a href="#">Pete Domenici (R-NM)</a> <a href="#">Mitch McConnell (R-KY)</a> <a href="#">Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX)</a> <a href="#">Sam Brownback (R-KS)</a> <a href="#">Lamar Alexander (R-TN)</a>	<a href="#">Alan Mollohan, Chair (D-WV)</a> <a href="#">Patrick Kennedy (D-RI)</a> <a href="#">Chaka Fattah (D-PA)</a> <a href="#">C.A. "Dutch" Ruppertsberger (D-MD)</a> <a href="#">Adam Schiff (D-CA)</a> <a href="#">Mike Honda (D-CA)</a> <a href="#">Rosa DeLauro (D-CT)</a> <a href="#">David Price (D-NC)</a>  <a href="#">Rodney Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member (R-NJ)</a> <a href="#">John Culberson (R-TX)</a> <a href="#">Hal Rogers (R-KY)</a> <a href="#">Tom Latham (R-IA)</a> <a href="#">Robert Aderholt (R-AL)</a>

**Sample Appropriations Letter:**

As Congress continues to work on the FY 2009 appropriations bills, we ask that you protect funding for the Second Chance Act (P.L. 110-199). The costly cycle of recidivism takes a major toll on our communities. We are working hard to address these challenges at the local level, but we need your help to ensure the full partnership of the federal government. We support the House version of \$45 million and hope funding will be safe in the event of a continuing resolution.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, at least 95 percent of all state prisoners will one day be released from prison. Most individuals return to their neighborhoods ill-equipped to meet the everyday challenges of life. Confronted with minimal job opportunities, housing issues, and the lack of other support, many individuals will return to prison or jail. Nearly two-thirds of former inmates are rearrested within three years of their release.

**[Here in X, <Insert local data or program work around reentry>.]**

The programs authorized by the Second Chance Act address the wide array of issues that impact reentry including employment, housing, substance abuse and mental health treatment, graduated sanctions, mentoring, and support for children and families. With the passage of the Second Chance Act, we have an immense opportunity to make smart, common sense approaches to help individuals released from prisons and jails succeed in the community and to improve public safety.

State and local governments around the country, as well as community and faith-based organizations, are excited to leverage federal funding to launch public-private reentry partnerships. Please make the Second Chance Act one of your priorities for FY 2009 and support \$45 million in funding for Second

Chance Act programs in FY09. If I can provide any more information about the program or the work we are doing in [INSERT STATE], please let me know.

**2. Contact members of the House and Senate whose leadership was crucial to the passage of the Second Chance Act and inclusion in funding bills to thank them for their support.**

To send an email to the members listed below, click on their names. NOTE: Some members will only accept email from their constituents, so you will have to enter a ZIP code in their district in order to use their webform to contact them. For those members with email addresses, clicking on the name will open a new email message to that member.

<i>Senators:</i>	<i>Representatives:</i>	
<a href="#">Joe Biden (D-DE)</a>	<a href="#">Chris Cannon (R-UT)</a>	<a href="#">Patrick Kennedy (D-RI)</a>
<a href="#">Sam Brownback (R-KS)</a>	<a href="#">James Clyburn (D-SC)</a>	<a href="#">Dan Lungren (R-CA)</a>
<a href="#">Dick Durbin (D-IL)</a>	<a href="#">Howard Coble (R-NC)</a>	<a href="#">Alan Mollohan (D-WV)</a>
<a href="#">Edward Kennedy (D-MA)</a>	<a href="#">John Conyers (D-MI)</a>	<a href="#">David Obey (D-WI)</a>
<a href="#">Patrick Leahy (D-VT)</a>	<a href="#">Danny Davis (D-IL)</a>	<a href="#">Mike Pence (R-IN)</a>
<a href="#">Barbara Mikulski (D-MD)</a>	<a href="#">Chaka Fattah (D-PA)</a>	<a href="#">C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger (D-MD)</a>
<a href="#">Richard Shelby (R-AL)</a>	<a href="#">Randy Forbes (R-VA)</a>	<a href="#">Bobby Scott (D-VA)</a>
<a href="#">Arlen Specter (R-PA)</a>	<a href="#">Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ)</a>	<a href="#">Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI)</a>

**Sample Thank You Letter**

We write to thank you for your strong support for the Second Chance Act (P.L. 110-199), which was signed into law by President Bush on April 9, 2008. We are working hard to address these challenges at the local level, and we appreciate your efforts to ensure the full partnership of the federal government.

As you know, over 2 million people are incarcerated in federal or state prisons or in local jails, and the vast majority -- 95 percent -- will eventually return to the community. Every year nearly 670,000 individuals are released from federal and state prisons and 9 million are released from jails, and two out of every three individuals will be rearrested within three years of release. This cycle places an increasing financial burden on our states and jeopardizes public safety. State and federal prison populations are expected to add approximately 192,000 persons at an increased cost of \$27.5 billion between 2007 and 2011, according to a recent report by the Pew Charitable Trust.

Successful reentry has implications for public safety, the welfare of children and families, state and local budgets, and community health. By doing a better job on offender reentry, we can increase public safety, prevent victimization, help restore communities and save the taxpayers' money.

With the passage of the Second Chance Act, we have an immense opportunity to make smart, common sense approaches to help individuals released from prisons and jails succeed in the community and to improve public safety. Thank you for your leadership on behalf of this important bill.

## **Second Chance Act Programs** (Total Annual Authorization: \$165 Million)

The programs authorized by the Second Chance Act will help reduce recidivism and better coordinate reentry services and policies at the federal, state and local levels to make the most of government investments. Allowable uses of funds include mentorship, housing, education and job training, engagement with community colleges, family programming, initiatives addressing victim priorities and restorative justice, research to improve the effectiveness of release and revocation decisions using risk assessment tools, and reentry court programs.

- ***Demonstration Grants.*** Provides grants to states and local governments that may be used to promote the safe and successful reintegration into the community of individuals who have been incarcerated.
- ***Mentoring Grants.*** Provides grants to nonprofit organizations that may be used for mentoring adult offenders or offering transitional services for reintegration into the community.
- ***Offender Reentry Substance Abuse Treatment.*** Creates grants to improve the availability of drug treatment to offenders in prisons, jails and juvenile facilities.
- ***Family Drug Treatment Programs.*** Authorizes grants to states, local governments, and Indian tribes to develop and implement family-based treatment programs for incarcerated parents who have minor children.
- ***Federal Reentry Initiative.*** Provides guidance to the Bureau of Prisons for enhanced reentry planning procedures. Specific information on health, employment, personal finance, release requirements and community resources shall be provided to each inmate released.
- ***Reentry Research.*** Authorizes the U.S. Justice Department's National Institute of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Statistics to conduct reentry-related research.
- ***National Adult and Juvenile Offender Reentry Resource Center.*** Establishes a national resource center to collect and disseminate best practices and to provide training on and support for reentry efforts.

For more information about the Second Chance Act, contact Leah Kane at (240) 482-8585 or [lkane@csg.org](mailto:lkane@csg.org), or visit the website of the Reentry Policy Council at <http://reentrypolicy.org/>.