



January 20, 2016

Dear Members of the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives,

On behalf of the National Association of Counties (NACo), the only national organization that represents America's 3,069 county governments, **we write to express support for S. 2123, the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act**. Counties play a major role in our nation's criminal justice system, as we own 91 percent of American jails – which collectively house one-third of all incarcerated individuals in the country – and invest \$70 billion in criminal justice each year. Counties know firsthand the importance of reforming the criminal justice system, and we commend bipartisan efforts, like S. 2123, that aim to achieve these reforms.

NACo supports measures that aim to reduce sentencing disparity, eliminate unnecessary confinement, establish more rational and appropriate sentencing policies and lead to better management of limited correctional resources. We also support provisions in S. 2123 that would promote the expungement of certain juvenile offenses, prohibit juvenile solitary confinement except in limited circumstances, and increase the instances in which juveniles are eligible for parole. Further, we support pre-release reentry programs featured in S. 2123 that would help incarcerated individuals prepare to reintegrate back into society. These individuals return to their communities with complex health, education, housing and other needs, which, if not addressed, can increase their likelihood of returning to jail or prison. Reentry programs are integral to their successful reintegration into the community.

Of course, reentry programs are pivotal to formerly incarcerated individuals not only prior to their release from correctional facilities, but even more so after these individuals return to their communities. With this in mind, **we hope that you will give consideration and support to the Second Chance Reauthorization Act (S. 1513/H.R. 3406)**, which would reauthorize and improve Second Chance Act programs that provide resources to states, local governments and nonprofit organizations to improve outcomes for individuals returning to communities. Specifically, the program improves the coordination of reentry services and policies at the state, tribal and local levels and funds demonstration grants, reentry courts, family-centered programs, mental health and addiction treatment and employment and mentoring services.

America's counties stand ready to work with Congress to achieve needed reforms to our nation's criminal justice system that will benefit communities across the nation. We commend you for your work on the Sentencing Reform Act and the Second Chance Reauthorization Act and look forward to working with you to advance these measures.

Sincerely,