

September 26, 2008

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Room H-218, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Allan Mollohan
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice
Science, and Related Agencies
Room H-310, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice
Science and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patrick Kennedy
407 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chaka Fattah
2301 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey, Ranking Member Lewis, Chairman Mollohan, Ranking Member Frelinghuysen, Congressman Kennedy, and Congressman Fattah:

As Congress considers a continuing resolution for FY 2009 appropriations, we ask that you protect funding for the Second Chance Act (P.L. 110-199). As a new authorization just signed into law in April 2008, the program is at risk of wasting one of its two critical years of authorization without funding next year.

If a CR for the whole of FY 2009 occurs, we ask that you repurpose the existing offender reentry funding for the Second Chance Act. The 2008 Omnibus included \$10 million for an offender re-entry program, which was used for the third and final year of funding for the Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) administered by the Department of Justice. Since PRI has expired, there are many benefits to repurposing this allocation for the Second Chance Act.

Chief among these benefits are:

- The Second Chance Act creates *grants for state and local governments*, including cities, counties and tribes (sec 101). PRI funds state grantees only, which neglects the resources needed to help cities and counties address the 9 million people cycling in and out of our jails each year.
- Funds are available for *nonprofit organizations* (sec. 211) to provide mentoring and other transitional services. With this funding stream, DOJ will be able to provide grants for the first time to community organizations providing reentry services.
- Though many grants to nonprofits have been awarded through federal agencies for employment-based programs, the mentoring grants provision (sec. 211) includes employment services as well as other critical areas like *mentoring, housing, substance abuse and mental health treatment and services for children and families*.
- The Second Chance Act establishes a *national reentry resource center* to collect and disseminate best practices and to provide training on and support for reentry efforts. This resource is in high demand at the state, local, tribal and community levels.

- The Second Chance Act also *tracks performance*, where each grantee must develop a comprehensive strategic reentry plan that contains annual and 5-year performance outcomes.
- SCA grants include a 50 percent match by grantees, which will help ensure *sustainability* of funded initiatives.
- The Second Chance Act represents unprecedented, bipartisan support in both chambers of Congress in its passage and is *supported by a broad spectrum of leaders* representing the diverse fields including law enforcement, corrections, courts, and behavioral health providers. Four years of Congressional work and collaboration went into the passage of the bill and its implementation without delay is critical to the health and safety of our country.

Please specify P.L. 110-199 in the CR to direct these dollars to the Second Chance Act in 2009. Through 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 in the process.

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Washington Lawyer’s Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs
WestCare Foundation
Women’s Inspirational Network, Shiloh Tabernacle CME Church, Lawton, Oklahoma
Word of Hope Ministries, Inc., Milwaukee, Wisconsin

September 26, 2008

The Honorable Danny K. Davis
2159 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott
1201 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Howard Coble
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Pence
1317 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressmen Davis, Scott, Coble, and Pence:

As Congress considers a continuing resolution for FY 2009 appropriations, we ask that you protect funding for the Second Chance Act (P.L. 110-199). As a new authorization just signed into law in April 2008, the program is at risk of wasting one of its two critical years of authorization without funding next year.

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Chief among these benefits are:

- The Second Chance Act creates *grants for state and local governments*, including cities, counties and tribes (sec 101). PRI funds state grantees only, which neglects the resources needed to help cities and counties address the 9 million people cycling in and out of our jails each year.
- Funds are available for *nonprofit organizations* (sec. 211) to provide mentoring and other transitional services. With this funding stream, DOJ will be able to provide grants for the first time to community organizations providing reentry services.
- Though many grants to nonprofits have been awarded through federal agencies for employment-based programs, the mentoring grants provision (sec. 211) includes employment services as well as other critical areas like *mentoring, housing, substance abuse and mental health treatment and services for children and families*.
- The Second Chance Act establishes a *national reentry resource center* to collect and disseminate best practices and to provide training on and support for reentry efforts. This resource is in high demand at the state, local, tribal and community levels.
- The Second Chance Act also *tracks performance*, where each grantee must develop a comprehensive strategic reentry plan that contains annual and 5-year performance outcomes.
- SCA grants include a 50 percent match by grantees, which will help ensure *sustainability* of funded initiatives.
- The Second Chance Act represents unprecedented, bipartisan support in both chambers of Congress in its passage and is *supported by a broad spectrum of leaders* representing the diverse fields including law enforcement, corrections, courts, and behavioral health providers. Four years of Congressional work and collaboration went into the passage of the bill and its implementation without delay is critical to the health and safety of our country.

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Word of Hope Ministries, Inc., Milwaukee, Wisconsin

September 26, 2008

The Honorable Robert Byrd
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
Room S-131, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Room S-146A, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science, and Related Agencies
144 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice
Science, and Related Agencies
123 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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September 26, 2008

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
201 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0802

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
433 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-4502

The Honorable Sam Brownback
303 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-1604

The Honorable Arlen Specter
303 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-3802

Dear Senators Biden, Brownback, Leahy and Specter:

As Congress considers a continuing resolution for FY 2009 appropriations, we ask that you protect funding for the Second Chance Act (P.L. 110-199). As a new authorization just signed into law in April 2008, the program is at risk of wasting one of its two critical years of authorization without funding next year.

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