

Safe Streets Second Chances

April 23, 2018

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Committee on Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert W. Goodlatte
Chairman
Judiciary Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grassley and Chairman Goodlatte:

The Safe Streets and Second Chances initiative, and the organizations listed below, strongly support prison and reentry reform. *Safe Streets & Second Chances (S3C)* is a new initiative that simultaneously addresses policy reforms and enhances reentry supports. S3C partners share the goal of expanding evidence-driven reentry services and policy reforms across the United States.

The United States ranks first in the number of citizens under correctional control and first in the rate of per-capita incarceration among industrialized nations¹. We spend \$80 billion annually on incarceration federally, and as much as \$250 billion if state and local costs are included².

One in three American adults has some type of criminal record, and more than 2 million Americans are in state and federal prisons and local jails³. More than 95% of them—nearly 700,000 each year—will one day leave prison and face the challenges of successful reintegration into our communities.

According to a comprehensive statewide survey, within five years of release almost three-quarters of state prisoners were re-arrested; more than one third of those arrests occurred within the first sixth months, and more than half occurred within the first year⁴. Federally, the numbers are only slightly better: nearly half of those released in a similar time-frame were re-arrested within eight years; almost a third were reconvicted, and most of those who recidivated did so within the first two years⁵.

With the cost and size of our correctional systems at historically unprecedented levels, and with recidivism rates persistently high, *our prison systems are not adequately rehabilitating offenders based on the best available evidence*. The Safe Streets and Second Chances Initiative believes both independent research and policy reform are desperately needed.

We therefore support the following principles:

- Congress and the states must use resources dedicated to criminal justice agencies to reduce crime, enhance public safety, and increase opportunity for all Americans.
- In-prison reentry programming must be crafted with incentives to enhance participation and guided by the best available evidence.
- Enhance existing risk and needs assessment tools and classification processes to ensure all inmates are given access to recidivism reduction programs that meet their needs.
- Expand access and funding for **voluntary** prison work programs to allow for the acquisition of real-world job skills and prepare for successful re-entry and sustainable employment upon release.
- Expand access and funding for continuing education and skilled-trades programming at all levels.
- Evaluate and facilitate public and private partnerships that improve pre- and post-release employment opportunities for inmates.
- Prioritize funding and support for programs that demonstrate evidence-driven practices proven by randomized controlled trial, to help reduce recidivism.

Respectfully,

- 42 North Partners – Mike Jandernoa, Founder
- Butterball Farms, Inc.
- Checkr, Inc.
- The Cordish Companies
- Dave’s Killer Bread Foundation
- Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soaps
- Genesis Health Clubs
- Georgia-Pacific LLC—Tye Darland, Sr. Vice President and General Counsel
- Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce
- Hugo Neu Corporation
- Hunt Companies, Inc – Woody Hunt, Chairman & CEO
- Kansas Chamber of Commerce

- Koch Industries Inc.—Mark V. Holden, Sr. Vice President and General Counsel
- Louisiana Association of Business and Industry - Stephen Waguespack, CEO and President
- Logicorp Enterprises LLC – Brian Anderson, Owner
- Norman Wells (Individual)
- No Loss for Words—Lisa Banes, Owner
- Reams Asset Management Company – Fred Reams, Founder
- Society for Human Resource Management
- Spirit AeroSystems, Inc.
- Texas Association of Businesses
- Tulsa Regional Chamber
- Uplift Solutions
- Uber Technologies, Inc.
- Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Zyvex Labs, LLC -- James Von Ehr, Founder and CEO

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¹ http://www.prisonstudies.org/highest-to-lowest/prison-population-total?field_region_taxonomy_tid=All Visited 3-4-2018

² <https://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=tp&tid=162> The Bureau of Justice Statistics provides historical tracking of costs, visited 3-4-2018

<http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=5239>

³ <http://www.sentencingproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Americans-with-Criminal-Records-Poverty-and-Opportunity-Profile.pdf> Visited 3-4-2018

⁴ <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=4986> Visited 3-4-2018

⁵ <https://www.ussc.gov/about/news/press-releases/march-9-2016> Visited 3-6-2018