Dear Chair Durbin, Chair Jordan, Ranking Member Graham, and Ranking Member Nadler:

As the undersigned national, state, and local organizations, we write to express our strong support for the Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2024 (S. ______ / H.R. ______), led by Senators Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Cory Booker (D-NJ), John Cornyn (R-TX), and Dick Durbin (D-IL), and Representatives Carol Miller (R-WV), Danny Davis (D-IL), Kelly Armstrong (R-ND), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Bruce Westerman (R-AR), Bobby Scott (D-VA), Jerry Nadler (D-NY), Mike Turner (R-OH), and Darin LaHood (R-IL). The legislation reauthorizes critical reentry grant programs from the Second Chance Act of 2008, and enhances services and supports for housing, childcare, career training, and treatment for substance use disorders.

Over 95% of the prison population will eventually be released,¹ with more than 600,000 individuals returning to their communities from prison each year and an even higher number entering and exiting local jails.² To address this need, the Second Chance Act was passed by Congress with bipartisan support and signed into law by President Bush in April 2008, aiming to improve reentry services and lower recidivism rates.

Our organizations span a diverse set of disciplines, including state and local government associations, business leaders, faith groups, law enforcement, direct service providers, and organizations representing people with lived experience. From our various standpoints, we collectively recognize the need for strong reentry services and resources to ensure the success of people reentering their communities after incarceration, as well as the significant impacts that Second Chance programs have made in promoting healthier and safer communities.

Since its passage 15 years ago, Second Chance has supported communities across the country in their efforts to reduce recidivism, with grants administered to 845 agencies across the U.S. states, territories, and the District of Columbia.³ From 2009 to 2023, the U.S. Department of Justice awarded over 1,100 Second Chance Act grants totaling more than $600 million to states, local, and tribal governments, as well as reentry-focused nonprofit organizations.⁴ To date, Second Chance grants have reached more than

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442,000 justice-involved individuals who participated in reentry services or parole and probation programs.\(^5\)

The Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2024 will extend critical programs to reduce recidivism, invest in communities, and promote public safety by:

1. Reauthorizing key grant programs that provide vital services, supports, and resources for people reentering their communities after incarceration;
2. Expanding allowable uses for supportive and transitional housing services for individuals reentering the community from prison and jail; and
3. Enhancing addiction treatment services for individuals with substance use disorders, including peer recovery services, case management, and overdose prevention.

This reauthorization bill will ensure that communities across the nation continue to receive support for crucial reentry programs and services. The legislation will further address the challenges of the continued substance use disorder and overdose crisis facing our nation. It is estimated that 65% of the prison population has a substance use disorder,\(^6\) and studies show that people released from prison can be 129 times more likely to overdose within the first two weeks of release.\(^7\) Now, more than ever, it is vital for communities to be invested in with resources around substance use disorder treatment, housing, employment, and other essential reentry services.

We respectfully urge you to take swift action on this important legislation. We thank you for your continued leadership and dedication to supporting recidivism reduction and improved reentry programs and services nationwide.

Sincerely,

The Council of State Governments Justice Center
All Rise
American Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence
American Correctional Association
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
American Jail Association
American Parole and Probation Association
Addiction Policy Forum
Behavioral Health Foundation
Benton Franklin Recovery Coalition
Beyond the Pod
Boss Mode Recovery
Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law
Catholic Charities USA
Center for Employment Opportunities
Civil Citation Network
Correctional Leaders Association
Faith and Freedom Coalition


