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December 4, 2025

Honorable John Thune
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate SD-511
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Mike Johnson
House Speaker
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House Minority Leader
2267 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Thune, Johnson, Schumer and Jeffries,

We, the undersigned State Attorneys General, write to support the passage of the Workforce Reentry Act (H.R. 1633)—a bipartisan bill that would codify an already-existing series of grants that support the reentry of formerly incarcerated individuals into the workforce after they serve their respective prison sentences. As set forth below, during our time in law enforcement, we have personally seen reentry programs advance public safety in our local communities. In addition, our collective experience confirms that reentry programs are a great use of taxpayer dollars in that they frequently pay for themselves through offsetting taxpayer savings.¹

Holding individuals accountable for the crimes that they commit and offering them opportunities for redemption and rehabilitation after they are released from prison are not mutually exclusive. In fact, doing both advances public safety: it promotes accountability, helps reintegrate the formerly incarcerated back into the work force, helps keep families together in a manner that will especially benefit their children, and reduces the likelihood of further victimization.

¹ <https://www.rand.org/well-being/justice-policy/portfolios/correctional-education/policy-impact.html> (reporting on a prior study showing that for every \$1 investment in prison education programs there is a \$4-5 dollar reduction in incarceration costs during the first three years post-release of a prisoner).

I. Recidivism Rates are Very High Absent Intervention.

To fully understand the importance of re-entry programs, it is important to note that without intervention, the future will be difficult for most formerly incarcerated individuals. According to a 2018 study conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, recidivism rates hover around 68% within 3 years of release.² That number then jumps to 83% within 9-years of release,³ costing U.S. taxpayers the billions of dollars in resulting criminal justice expenses.

On its own, every act of recidivism threatens the safety of the public that is victimized by higher crime. But an often-untold story is the toll that recidivism takes on the innocent families of both victims and formerly incarcerated individuals, which are often broken by an otherwise inevitable cycle of poor decisions (or “inevitable cycle of continued criminal activity”).

II. Re-Entry Programs Have Proven to Reduce Rates of Recidivism.

High recidivism rates are not inevitable, and evidence confirms they are addressed through re-entry programs. One of the root causes for recidivism is the failure to prepare formerly incarcerated individuals to re-enter society. Finding a stable occupation upon release from prison plays a crucial role in successful re-entry.

In Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, for instance, federal grant funding was used to provide job training programs for formerly incarcerated individuals.⁴ To date, the recidivism rate for those individuals has stayed well below national averages at 7%.⁵

Similarly, York County, Pennsylvania has implemented a number of re-entry programs in its criminal justice system.⁶ The net result was a 30% percent reduction in crime and a 45% percent reduction in the County’s prison population, resulting in \$57 million in taxpayer savings.⁷

Suffice it to say, reducing recidivism is a key component of public safety. Among other things, it reduces crime, protects victims, and preserves families. But in addition to advancing public safety, reducing recidivism is a broader human issue. By helping formerly

² <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/2018-update-prisoner-recidivism-9-year-follow-period-2005-2014>

³ <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/2018-update-prisoner-recidivism-9-year-follow-period-2005-2014>

⁴ <https://www.fox43.com/article/news/local/york-county/us-rep-lloyd-smucker-lawmakers-pass-workforce-reentry-act-york-county/521-9499a1d9-8a90-41fc-baff-0af648dffd58>

⁵ <https://www.fox43.com/article/news/local/york-county/us-rep-lloyd-smucker-lawmakers-pass-workforce-reentry-act-york-county/521-9499a1d9-8a90-41fc-baff-0af648dffd58>

⁶ <https://www.ydr.com/story/news/2025/08/27/smucker-sunday-highlight-issue-of-inmates-adjusting-to-life-outside/85848524007/>

⁷ <https://www.ydr.com/story/news/2025/08/27/smucker-sunday-highlight-issue-of-inmates-adjusting-to-life-outside/85848524007/>

incarcerated individuals find a stable income, it offers those individuals a path to redemption that provides stability for their children by keeping families together and breaks an otherwise unbreakable cycle that rips apart families.

The results of Lancaster and York County's reentry programs are no outlier. As a result of the federal government's decades-long funding of reentry programs, there have been substantial reductions in incarceration rates across the country.⁸

Unfortunately, grant funding for re-entry programs has not been made permanent, making its availability subject to year-to-year funding battles. That creates a pressing need for stability and permanence so that organizations providing proven re-entry programs can plan ahead and succeed, and in so doing, advance public safety in our communities.

III. Reducing Recidivism Advances Public Safety.

Although individuals should be accountable for the crimes that they commit, programs that help formerly incarcerated individuals re-enter society do not diminish that accountability and have demonstrated that they reduce recidivism. In doing so, they not only offer formerly incarcerated individuals a path to redemption but also help provide stability for children by keeping families intact, and benefit the public by reducing recidivism and the resulting taxpayer costs.

By making funding for existing re-entry programs permanent and adding new requirements to ensure the effective use of those funds, H.R. 1633 is a win-win. It helps rehabilitate and humanize individuals while advancing public safety and benefitting U.S. taxpayers. We accordingly urge Congress to act swiftly to pass this legislation. We also welcome an opportunity to speak with you further regarding our support.

Sincerely,



Brian Schwalb
District of Columbia Attorney General



Matthew J. Platkin
New Jersey Attorney General



Dave Sunday
Pennsylvania Attorney General



Derek Brown
Utah Attorney General

⁸ https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/50-States-1-Goal_For-PDF_with508report.pdf



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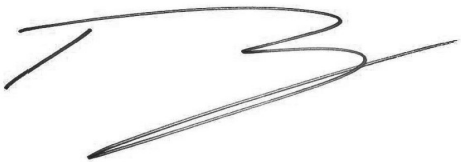
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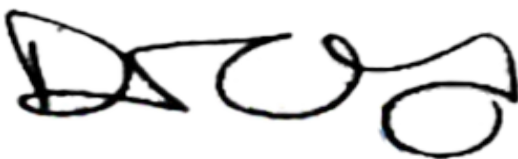
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Marty Jackley
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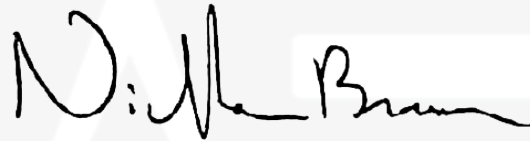
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