



JESUITS

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The Society of Jesus
in the United States

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United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

September 1, 2014

Dear Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Grassley, and Committee Members,

On behalf of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) in the United States, we write you today to urge you to support S.1690, the Second Chance Reauthorization Act.

This year alone, 650,000 men, women, and juveniles will re-enter society after they serve their sentences in federal and state prisons. An additional 9 million individuals will be released from local jails and detention centers. The bipartisan Second Chance Act of 2008 addressed many of the challenges facing individuals reentering society following incarceration. However, more must be done to ensure as many people successfully re-enter society as possible.

As you know, the Second Chance Act has provided much needed financial assistance to federal, state, and local agencies to help them re-integrate returning citizens. Second Chance Act funds have assisted non-profits in providing mentoring and transitional services and have created a national resource center for local governments, services providers, corrections offices, and faith based and community organizations to share best practices. The legislation also provided grants to expand family-based treatment centers that offer comprehensive services for both parents and children.

In tight financial times, we believe that prioritizing funding for re-entry services is not only the moral choice, it is the fiscally smart choice. By investing in the successful reintegration of returning citizens, our nation can save money through programs that have proven track-records on reducing recidivism rates.

As people of faith who walk daily with our returning brothers and sisters, we take solace in the words of Pope Francis, who reminds us that "God is in everyone's life," even in those whose actions we find hard to forgive. We urge you to reauthorize this vital program that offers a helping hand and a second chance to those who need it most.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. Please contact Matt Cuff (mcuff@jesuits.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Rev. Gregory Boyle SJ
Founder/Executive Director,
Homeboy Industries
Justice Initiative

Rev. Michael Kennedy SJ
Executive Director,
Jesuit Restorative

V.Rev. Timothy Kesicki SJ
President,
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