



A CAMPAIGN OF THE NATIONAL JUVENILE JUSTICE
& DELINQUENCY PREVENTION COALITION
TO REAUTHORIZE THE JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION ACT (JJDP)
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April 6, 2009

The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr.
United States Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Ms. Laurie O. Robinson,
Acting Assistant Attorney General
Office of Justice Programs
810 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20531

Mr. Jeffrey Slowikowski
Acting Administrator
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
810 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20531

Dear Attorney General Holder, Ms. Robinson and Mr. Slowikowski:

We, the undersigned—representing more than 100 national, international, state and local organizations and hundreds of thousands of constituents—thank you for your leadership in our common area of interest: juvenile justice and delinquency prevention. Our correspondence follows letters and meetings many of us have held with you in the last few weeks and months as you have taken leadership positions within the Department of Justice.

We are pleased to learn of your support for the JJDP Reauthorization bill that was approved in a strong bipartisan vote of the Committee on the Judiciary last summer (S. 3155) and hope that you will offer support to the new, similar Reauthorization bill (S. 678) re-introduced in the 111th Congress on Tuesday, March 24, 2009, by Judiciary Chair, Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), with Ranking Member, Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA), and their colleagues, Senator Herb Kohl (D-WI) and Senator Richard Durbin (D-IL).

We are proud to stand with the Senators and support their bipartisan leadership and vision as expressed in S. 678, the “Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2009.”

The Leahy-Specter-Kohl-Durbin legislation for JJDP reauthorization (S. 678) reinforces and advances many of the policy priorities of the Obama Administration, including provisions to ameliorate racial/ethnic disparities and sentencing disparities as identified in the Administration’s agenda on Civil Rights and protecting children from abuse, neglect and violence, consistent with the Administration’s agenda on Child Advocacy. In addition, S.678 shares the Administration’s commitment to use of evidence-based and effective practices for much needed mental health and substance abuse services, as well as afterschool and

mentoring programs for youth at risk of court involvement and youth under court supervision. Moreover, S. 678 improves and expands alternatives to detention and incarceration, and supportive services for re-entry of formerly incarcerated/detained juveniles into positive family and community life. As you know, these are policy priorities cited in the Administration's various agendas, including those on Family, Education, Employment, Health and Urban Policy.

S. 678 is premised on research-based understandings of juvenile justice and delinquency prevention. It advances important improvements to the JJDP, its core requirements and its central purposes, provides enhanced safeguards for youth in the system, increases community safety, and ensures progress toward racial fairness.

The bill also restores OJJDP's resources and leadership functions to more effectively serve as *the* principal federal entity responsible for implementation of the JJDP throughout the states, territories, Indian tribal lands, and the District of Columbia.

S. 678 responds to the following needs, identified by hundreds of state, tribal and local constituents and stakeholder organizations, nationwide, with whom the Senators and their staff members have engaged and given voice in the process of crafting their legislation:

- 1. Authorizes effective levels of funding for the core programs of the JJDP under Title II, including the federal support needed to implement the core requirements of the statute and to leverage state investments in juvenile justice.**
- 2. Extends the adult *Jail Removal and Sight and Sound Separation* core requirements to apply to juveniles held pretrial, whether charged in juvenile or adult court.**
- 3. Confirms States' flexibility to serve youth adjudicated in criminal court in juvenile facilities rather than adult prisons through extended juvenile jurisdiction.**
- 4. Strengthens the core requirement on *Disproportionate Minority Contact* (DMC) by expecting States to take data-driven steps to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system, and to evaluate and publicly report their progress.**
- 5. Strengthens the *Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders* (DSO) core requirement by asking all states to phase-out and fully eliminate use of the Valid Court Order Exception that currently causes non-offending youth/status offenders to be locked up.**
- 6. Encourages States to eliminate dangerous practices in confinement and to promote adoption of best practices and standards.**
- 7. Calls for evidence-based and promising approaches in mental health and substance abuse screening, assessment and treatment including diversion to home based and community based services, while also encouraging safe and effective treatment for youth in confinement, as well as supportive discharge planning and re-entry services.**
- 8. Assists States (as well as local and tribal jurisdictions) to come into compliance with the JJDP with Improvement Grants and also establishes Incentive Grants to encourage States to use evidence-based or promising practices and to engage in workforce development.**

9. Enhances the partnership between the States and OJJDP by expanding training, technical assistance, research, and evaluation. Restores the congressionally intended functions of a national association of State Advisory Groups, separate from the Federal Advisory Committee.
10. Encourages transparency, timeliness, public notice, and communication on the part of OJJDP, its agents and the States.
11. Expands juvenile crime prevention efforts by reauthorizing and increasing funding for JJDPA Title V and Mentoring.

Given the significant gains made in S. 678, the undersigned organizations seek your support for this important bill, as introduced. We look forward to continuing to work with each of you and the Administration to further support, as well as to further inform and improve, the provisions of the 2009 JJDPA Reauthorization as the legislative process unfolds in the 111th Congress.

Respectfully submitted,
-- listed in alphabetical order

National, International and Regional Organizations

- A World Fit for Kids!
- African American Juvenile Justice Project
- Afterschool Alliance
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP)
- American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- American Correctional Association (ACA)
- American Humane Association
- American Probation and Parole Association (APPA)
- American Psychological Association (APA)
- Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law
- Campaign for Youth Justice
- Center for Children's Law and Policy
- Center for Law and Education (CLE)
- Child Welfare League of America (CWLA)
- Children's Defense Fund (CDF)
- Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ)
- Community Voices: Healthcare for the Underserved, Morehouse School of Medicine
- Communities for People Inc.
- Correctional Education Association
- Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA)
- First Focus
- Girls Inc.
- International CURE
- Just Detention International (formerly Stop Prisoner Rape)
- Justice Policy Institute (JPI)
- Juvenile Law Center

- Legal Action Center
- Mental Health America (formerly National Mental Health Association)
- Mid-Atlantic Juvenile Defender Center
- National Alliance of Faith and Justice (NAFJ)
- National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)
- National Association of Counties (NACo)
- National Association of School Psychologists
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
- National Collaboration for Youth
- National Congress of American Indians
- National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare
- National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
- National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD)
- National Disability Rights Network (NDRN)
- National Foster Care Coalition (NFCC)
- National H.I.R.E. Network
- National Juvenile Defender Center (NJDC)
- National Juvenile Justice Network (NJJN)
- National Partnership for Juvenile Services, and its Partners:
 - Council for Educators of At-Risk and Delinquent Youth
 - Juvenile Justice Trainers Association (JJTA)
 - National Association of Juvenile Correctional Agencies
 - National Juvenile Detention Association
- National Network for Youth (NNFY)
- National Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
- National Youth Advocates Program (YAP)
- Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)
- Southern Juvenile Defender Center
- The Sentencing Project
- United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
- Voices for America's Children
- Volunteers of America (VOA)
- W. Haywood Burns Institute
- Women of Reform Judaism
- World Vision
- Youth Build USA and International
- Youth Law Center
- YMCA of the USA

State/Local Organizations and Individuals

- Action for Children, North Carolina
- Alabama Youth Justice Coalition
- Alternatives Inc., Illinois

- Citizens for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE) Virginia Inc.
- Families and Allies of Virginia's Youth
- FIRSTLINK, Ohio
- Francine Sherman, Director, Juvenile Rights Advocacy Project at Boston College Law School
- Franklin County Public Defender Office, Ohio
- Grassroots Artists MovEmenT (G.A.ME), Bronx, NY
- Illinois PTA
- Indiana Juvenile Justice Task Force, Inc.
- John Howard Association of Illinois
- Juneau Youth Services, Alaska
- JustChildren Program, Legal Aid Justice Center, Charlottesville, VA
- Juvenile Justice Coalition of Ohio
- Juvenile Rights Advocacy Project at Boston College Law School
- Kansas Advisory Group on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Kentucky Protection and Advocacy
- Kristin Henning, Professor/Co-Director, Juvenile Justice Clinic, Georgetown University Law Center
- Leadership and Renewal Outfitters, Indiana
- Legal Aid Society of Birmingham, Alabama
- Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota
- Maine Children's Alliance
- Maine Juvenile Justice Advisory Group
- Melissa Coretz Goemann, Director, Juvenile Law and Policy Clinic, University of Richmond School of Law
- Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency
- Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers (Missouri PTA)
- Missouri Juvenile Justice Association
- Partners with Families and Children, Spokane, WA
- Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality, Oregon
- Theodore A. Daligdig III, Director, Education and Health Programs, Hawaii Department of Defense and Hawaii National Guard
- Texas Criminal Juvenile Coalition
- Virginia Coalition for Juvenile Justice
- Wallace J. Mlyniec, Director, Juvenile Justice Clinic and Lupo-Ricci Professor of Law, Georgetown University Law Center
- Wisconsin Community Services
- Wisconsin PTA
- Youth Homes, Inc., of Charlotte, NC