



February 12, 2018

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein:

On behalf of the 115,700 members and affiliates of the American Psychological Association (APA), I am writing in support of S. 1917, the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act (SRCA) of 2017. APA is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States and is the world's largest association of psychologists. Comprising researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants, and students, APA works to advance the creation, communication, and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives.

S. 1917 seeks to take critical steps toward the reform of our federal criminal justice system. We are particularly appreciative of your efforts to: avoid racial and other disparities in addressing offenders' risks and needs; reform unproductive mandatory minimums that disproportionately harm minority offenders, their families, and their communities; retroactively apply sentencing reforms, including disparities created by crack/powder cocaine sentencing disparities; further support prisoner education and vocational training; facilitate Department of Veterans Affairs support for veterans reentering society from prison; limit juvenile solitary confinement; and protect juvenile records. APA has a history of science-based advocacy around many of these issues, and we would be happy to assist their advancement, however possible.

We understand that S. 1917 is a result of a delicate process of negotiation, however, we hope the Judiciary Committee will consider an addition to the bill we believe is in the spirit of SRCA. Protections for the most vulnerable are critical, and we urge you to include language from H.R. 3356, the Prison Reform and Redemption Act, to protect pregnant women in Bureau of Prisons (BOP) custody from the use of restraints in all cases where there are not serious, reasonable safety or flight risks. BOP already maintains policies that address this issue in meaningful ways; however, SRCA represents an important opportunity to codify and improve upon existing protections. The use of restraints on incarcerated pregnant women is almost always unnecessary, and the practice carries serious risks to the safety and well-being of the mother and fetus. We urge you to use this opportunity to further protect these women and their pregnancies.

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Thank you, once more, for your strong leadership in introducing the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2017, which addresses some of the most vital issues facing American society today. If you have any questions, or if our association can be of assistance in your efforts, please contact Micah Haskell-Hoehl (202-336-5935, [mhaskell-hoehl@apa.org](mailto:mhaskell-hoehl@apa.org)) in our Government Relations Office. We look forward to working with you as you move toward justice system reform.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Clinton W. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Clinton W. Anderson, Ph.D.  
Interim Executive Director  
Public Interest Directorate

Cc: Members, Senate Committee on the Judiciary