



February 13, 2018

The Honorable Charles E. Grassley
United State Senate
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
United State Senate
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein:

The Center for American Progress welcomes the forthcoming markup of the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act (SRCA), S. 1917, under the bipartisan leadership of the bill's sponsor's Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL). SRCA, a bill that has broad bipartisan support, would make significant strides in reducing mandatory minimum sentences that contributed to mass incarceration at the federal level while also taking steps to reform the Bureau of Prisons.

This comprehensive bill has support from elected leaders and criminal justice reform advocates from across the ideological spectrum. The need for legislation that includes both sentencing and corrections reform is especially urgent in the current environment, not only to reduce the size of the Bureau of Prisons but to provide the necessary accountability on the federal government to effectively implement the legislation. Progress on criminal justice reform cannot be confined to only addressing one facet of our broken criminal justice system, and we urge Senate Judiciary Committee and Congress to embrace a comprehensive approach.

The Center for American Progress endorses SRCA in its current form as it advances a smart-on-crime approach to criminal justice – one that is fair, just and proportional, comprehensive, and driven by evidence and data. Moreover, the Committee's markup of SRCA is a critical first step to returning to the national conversation that was started two years ago which included reentry, sentencing reform, accountability in policing, access to legal assistance, and the eliminating the criminalization of poverty. The status quo is not working. We need to improve our country's justice system and reverse the policies that contributed to 40 years of mass incarceration. The upcoming markup is an important step to finally enacting overdue sensible reforms.

Sincerely,

Edward K. Chung
Vice President, Criminal Justice Reform