



# CHURCH & SOCIETY

The United Methodist Church

Living **FAITH** Seeking **JUSTICE** Pursuing **PEACE**

February 14, 2018

The Honorable Charles Grassley  
Chairman  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Ranking Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**RE: The United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society calls for the  
Judiciary Committee to pass the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act, S. 1917**

Dear Chairman Grassley and Ranking Member Feinstein,

The United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society writes to you in support of the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act (S. 1917). We are gladdened by this legislation and the bipartisan base that has brought forward this much-needed action on criminal justice reform.

Per our official Church statement on criminal justice, The United Methodist Church believes that,

“A justice system that reflects God’s desires for the world is one that is healing and restorative. Those who have been victimized by crime and the communities in which they reside need healing. Healing can come as safety and security are restored and the broken bonds of mutuality and shared existence are mended. Those who commit crimes must be held accountable through making amends to those they have caused to suffer, and they must be given the opportunity to return to their full place in society and community.

“A justice system must be first and foremost about humanization since God’s justice always works to bring reconciliation. Systems of retribution breed only violence and isolation. Indeed, “we cannot punish our way to a healthy society” (Laura Magnani and Harmon Wray, *Beyond Prisons: A New Interfaith Paradigm for Our Failed Prison System*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press [p. 5]).

–From Resolution #5031 *Humanizing Criminal Justice*.

With these values and beliefs, we firmly register our support of the Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act and urge you and your colleagues to vote in favor of S. 1917.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe

General Secretary

General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church

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