



# THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

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TOM COCHRAN

January 13, 2015

## AN OPEN LETTER TO CONGRESS FROM THE NATION'S MAYORS ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

Dear Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate:

We write to register the strong support of the nation's mayors for quick passage of bipartisan legislation under consideration in Congress that would bring needed reforms to the criminal justice system.

Bills pending in both the House and the Senate would address decades of serious inequities in federal sentencing for certain drug offenders, target violent criminals, and grant judges greater discretion at sentencing for lower-level drug crimes. They would provide for enhanced mandatory minimums and sentences for certain firearm offenses and apply the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 retroactively. The Senate bill also contains provisions intended to reduce recidivism by helping federal prisoners successfully re-enter society – provisions that we believe are essential to meaningful justice reform.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is a bipartisan organization and we are especially pleased to be urging support of bipartisan legislation that addresses a critical problem in this country. In November, the leadership of the U.S. Conference of Mayors approved an emergency policy resolution offered by Conference President and Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake that calls for reform of the criminal justice system consistent with bipartisan legislation (S. 2123) that had been reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee. It is unusual for our Executive Committee to take such action and the fact it did speaks to the importance that mayors place on passage of such legislation.

This sorely needed legislation has broad support and is important to our cities, our residents, and our nation. We are committed to seeing such criminal justice reform legislation enacted into law as early as possible this year. We urge Congress to move quickly to consider it, and we urge you to support it when it comes up for a vote.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Mayor of Baltimore, President  
Mick Cornett, Mayor of Oklahoma City, OK, Vice President  
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