



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

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March 16, 2016

The Honorable Charles Grassley, Chairman
Judiciary Committee
United States Senate
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley:

On behalf of the nearly 1.7 million members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and our Auxiliaries, I write in support of Section 208 of S. 2123, the *Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2015*.

According to the most recent data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics, over 130,000 veterans are incarcerated in state and federal prisons, representing approximately 8 percent of the total prison population. While the VFW realizes that veterans who are convicted of crimes must suffer the consequences, we also recognize that the time will come when their sentences are completed and they are released. At that time, we believe those veterans should be given every opportunity to reintegrate into society.

By allowing the Department of Veterans Affairs reasonable access to incarcerated veterans to inform them of their benefits before they are released, your legislation would accomplish that goal. Although it would only apply to veterans incarcerated in federal prisons, we believe it would serve as a model for state lawmakers seeking similar reforms at the state level.

Thank you again for your leadership on this issue. The VFW looks forward to working with you and your staff to pass this much needed piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

Raymond C. Kelley, Director
VFW National Legislative Service

NO ONE DOES MORE FOR VETERANS.