

## Second Chance Act Talking Points

- The number of individuals in prisons and jails is at an all-time high, and the vast majority will be released back into their communities at some point.
  - Federal and state corrections facilities held over 1.6 million prisoners at the end of 2010—one of every 201 U.S. residents.<sup>1</sup>
  - At least 95 percent of state prisoners will be released back to their communities.<sup>2</sup>
  - Five million individuals were on probation or parole at the end of 2010.<sup>3</sup>
- Facing a number of issues and obstacles upon their return and often lacking services or support, a large number of these individuals recidivate.
  - They return with complex health, education, housing and other needs—which, if not addressed, can increase their likelihood of returning to prison.
- The Second Chance Act (SCA) was signed into law in April 2008 after receiving overwhelming bipartisan support in Congress.
- The bill outlines a common-sense, evidence-based approach to reducing crime and improving public safety by supporting reentry programs and policies, including:
  - Employment assistance and job-skills training
  - Substance abuse treatment
  - Housing assistance
  - Family-based programming
  - Individual and group mentoring
  - Victim support
- Since 2009, over 300 local, state, or tribal government agencies and nonprofit organizations from 48 states have received SCA grants for reentry programs serving adults and juveniles.
- With the number of people returning from prison and jail increasing, the need for federal funding for reentry grant programs is greater now than ever before.
  - If current trajectories continue, state and federal prisons will grow by 13 percent by 2013, adding an additional 192,000 prisoners at a cost of \$27.5 billion.<sup>4</sup>
- In addition to providing services to improve communities and the lives of individuals returning from prisons and jails, Second Chance Act-funded programs have already shown promising results towards the long-term goal of reducing recidivism.
- **Please support continued funding for the Second Chance Act.**

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Guerino, Paige M. Harrison, and William J. Sabol, *Prisoners in 2010*, NCJ 236096 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011). <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/p10.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Timothy Hughes and Doris James Wilson, *Reentry Trends in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2002). [bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/reentry.pdf](http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/reentry.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Lauren E. Glaze, *Correctional Population in the United States, 2010*, NCJ 236319 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2010). <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/cpus10.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Public Safety Performance Project, *Public Safety, Public Spending: Forecasting America's Prison Population 2007-2011*. (Washington, D.C.: Public Safety Performance Project, Pew Charitable Trusts, February 2007).