



National District Attorneys Association
Staff Contact: Frank Russo
703-519-1655 or frusso@ndaajustice.org
www.ndaa.org

November 13, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump,

On behalf of the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), the largest prosecutor organization in the country representing 2,500 elected and appointed District Attorneys as well as 40,000 Assistant District Attorneys, who collectively prosecute around 95 percent of the crime in the United States, I write to support the revised *First Step Act*. This legislation is a bipartisan effort to address front-end sentencing reform and back-end prison reform, and our association is appreciative of your efforts to partner with the Nation's prosecutors on this important matter.

NDAA previously supported the *Sentencing Reform & Corrections Act (SRCA)* during the last Congress as a carefully crafted bipartisan compromise. After weeks of discussions with White House and Senate Judiciary Committee staff, our organization is confident that the revised *First Step Act* strikes an appropriate balance between addressing the needs of the current Federal prison population while ensuring criminals are penalized appropriately.

Tasked with the constitutional duty of protecting the communities we serve from bad actors while seeking justice for victims of crime and protecting the innocent, our members are acutely aware of the need for reforms to our criminal justice system. As currently written, the revised *First Step Act* includes much needed prison reform provisions that will provide the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) with the guidance and resources to assist in lowering recidivism rates for low-risk prisoners. Further, the addition of four sentencing reform provisions takes a precision-like approach to sentencing guidelines associated with certain crimes. Absent meaningful sentencing reform, where the truly dangerous are locked up for an appropriate period of time and those with addiction or mental health issues have the chance for treatment and rehabilitation, rising recidivism rates will continue to persist.

While the legislation makes its way to the Senate, NDAA plans to continue engaging with your staff and law enforcement stakeholders to improve the language in the revised *First Step Act*. Specifically, our organization is working to ensure any reinvestment of savings generated because of front-end sentencing reform provisions is invested back into state and local law enforcement and prosecutor agencies to prevent crime, target drug trafficking operations, train law enforcement and prosecutors in the field and respond to other emerging issues within the criminal justice system.

Our members continue to call for a new commission to explore issues across the criminal justice system to ensure law enforcement and prosecutors can protect the communities they serve and respond to emerging issues in the field. In partnership with your administration, we hope to make

that call a reality. As part of that commission, it is imperative that the local prosecutor perspective is represented as the legal end of the criminal justice system continuum. Without it, a comprehensive review of the broader stakeholder system is incomplete. NDAA looks forward to having one of our members bring the state and local prosecutor's valuable perspective to the table once the commission is established.

We appreciate your efforts, as well as the efforts of a bipartisan group of Members of Congress and staff, to ensure the American criminal justice system is continually improved upon and seen as a model for innovative and cutting-edge programming that we see in our own members' offices every day. Thank you for working with the Nation's prosecutors and NDAA on this historic effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jonathan W. Blodgett".

Jonathan Blodgett
President