



NATIONAL DISTRICT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION

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Nation's Largest Prosecutor Organization Calls for Continued Progress on Criminal Justice Reform to Improve Trust in the Rule of Law

ARLINGTON, Virginia – The National District Attorneys Association (NDAA) was disappointed to learn of the breakdown in negotiations on a comprehensive policing reform package in Congress. Despite the apparent conclusion of those discussions, the Nation's prosecutors strongly support continued progress on bipartisan, bicameral criminal justice reform legislation. Common sense policies that work to end the disparities in our criminal laws, support rehabilitation for incarcerated individuals, and promote the strengthening of community intervention to reduce crime will work to build trust with the citizens prosecutors and law enforcement serve on a daily basis. Congressional leaders should take action to advance proposals that meet this standard, including the following:

Eliminating Quantifiably Unjust Application of the Law (EQUAL) Act. The legislation takes necessary steps to end the vast difference in sentencing between crack and powder cocaine under Federal law, a change that has already occurred in over 40 states across the country.

Driving for Opportunity Act of 2021. This proposal provides grants to help states move away from the practice of suspending, revoking, or refusing to renew a driver's license for failure to pay a civil or criminal fee or fine.

The Kenneth P. Thompson Begin Again Act. The legislation would allow judges to expunge the records of first-time drug offenders in narrow situations to provide these individuals with a second chance.

These policies have widespread support from both sides of the aisle, reform advocates, and the law enforcement community. Now is the time for Congress to prioritize legislative efforts that meet the challenge of increasing trust in the criminal justice system while providing prosecutors and law enforcement the resources needed for ongoing efforts to keep communities safe. Prosecutors around the country continue to embrace reforms including modernizing qualified immunity, improving policing practices, and addressing mental health through non-carceral approaches. NDAA looks forward to working alongside Congress to end unnecessary and harmful inequities so that people of all backgrounds maintain faith in the rule of law.

Formed in 1950, NDAA is the oldest and largest national organization representing state and local prosecutors in the country. With more than 5,000 members representing over two thirds of the state and local prosecutors' offices, NDAA is recognized as the leading source of national expertise on the prosecution function and is a valuable resource for the media, academia, government, and community leaders. NDAA's mission is to provide state and local prosecutors with the knowledge, skills, and support they need to ensure that justice is done and that public safety rights are protected.

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