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LEGAL ACTION CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Second Chance Reauthorization Act Introduced

Bill would reauthorize and update Second Chance federal reentry grant programs

WASHINGTON, DC – Legal Action Center is pleased to report that Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner and Rep. Danny Davis, along with 25 other bi-partisan members of the House of Representatives have introduced legislation to reauthorize the Second Chance Act. Originally passed in 2008, the Second Chance Act is already reducing recidivism and improving public safety. Recidivism rates are down by 11% in Texas, 19% in North Carolina and 9% in Wisconsin. Since 2009, Second Chance programs have served over 92,000 people in 49 states and the District of Columbia. After several years of implementation and study, it's time to reauthorize and update the law to emphasize and improve the most effective programs.

The Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2015, would:

- Reauthorize the most successful Second Chance programs, including reentry demonstration grants and mentoring grants, grants for family-based substance use treatment and other substance use services, and grants for education and career preparation
- Expand opportunities for community-based nonprofits to apply for grant programs for which they are currently ineligible to receive direct funding
- Specifically identifies medication-assisted treatment as a supported activity for reentry courts funded by the reentry demonstration grants program
- Expand the Second Chance careers training grant program to support programs that provide job training for a wider range of occupations
- Require coordination among multiple federal agencies, state and local government, and service providers on federal programs and policies related to reentry
- Expand the mentoring grants program to support employment services, substance use and mental health treatment, housing, and other transitional services

According to Paul Samuels, Legal Action Center's President and Director, "The Second Chance Act represents an important federal investment in successful reentry. Second Chance grants support evidence-based programs that are proven to reduce recidivism as well as innovative programs that can expand our knowledge of what works in this rapidly developing field. High recidivism rates remain, harming families and communities. But Second Chance grants have been shown to reduce recidivism today and enhance our knowledge about the types of practices that work in reentry."

"Legal Action Center has supported the Second Chance Act since it was first introduced in Congress and subsequently passed in 2008," observed Gabrielle de la Gueronniere, LAC's Director of Policy. "We know that successful reentry is one of the keys to stopping the revolving door to prison and ensuring people access the substance use treatment and other care and support that make communities truly safe and healthy."

Original co-sponsors of the legislation include:

- Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (R-WI)
- Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL)
- Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA)
- Rep. Randy Forbes (R-VA)
- Rep. Tom Rooney (R-FL)
- Rep. Doug Collins (R-GA)
- Rep. Crescent Hardy (R-NV)
- Rep. Randy Forbes (R-VA)
- Rep. Tom Marino (R-PA)
- Rep. Steve Chabot (R-OH)
- Rep. Mark Walker (R-NC)
- Rep. Bill Johnson (R-OH)
- Rep. Steve Stivers (R-OH)
- Rep. Frank Guinta (R-NH)
- Rep. Chris Gibson (R-NY)
- Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL)
- Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA)
- Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI)
- Rep. Jim Clyburn (D-SC)
- Rep. Donna Edwards (D-MD)
- Rep. Chakah Fattah (D-PA)
- Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA)
- Rep. Yvette Clarke (D-NY)
- Rep. John Conyers (D-MI)
- Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD)
- Rep. Gwen Moore (D-WI)
- Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee (D-TX)
- Rep. Hank Johnson (D-GA)
- Rep. Steve Cohen (D-TN)