



December 4, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, United States Senate

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader, United States Senate

The Honorable Charles Grassley, Chairman,
Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate

The Honorable Diane Feinstein, Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary United States Senate

Dear Senator McConnell, Senator Schumer, Senator Grassley, and Senator Feinstein:

As you know, we previously expressed our concerns to Congress that the current version of the FIRST STEP Act is a threat to the safety of law enforcement and the communities we protect.^[1]

On November 29th we have received an alternative version of the proposed First Step legislation, drafted apparently in response to priorities and concerns we expressed in our letter of November 15th. If the 11/29 proposed legislation proceeds in its present attached form, it will have our support in Congress. While not perfect, it strikes an ideal balance between meaningful reform and the public we have sworn to protect.

Chiefs and Sheriffs embrace a wide range of criminal justice reforms and agree that Federal inmates should engage in constructive activities leading to strong reentry programs. When offenders are returned to the community, Sheriffs and Chiefs support supervision, drug treatment and job placement.

[Not one of our original concerns, it rightly corrects an apparent drafting error that put overly broad, potentially unconstitutional, and cost prohibitive unfunded federal mandates on state and local law enforcement concerning juvenile facilities housing minors detained prior to disposition or conviction. We believe keeping that section restricts and countermands correctional operations and penological interests afforded in *Turner v. Safley*, 482 U.S. 78 (1987).^[2]] We ask that this error be corrected in future versions of the legislation.

Please know that we are grateful for the efforts of authors who have drafted this important legislation with appropriate cautions and measures that will protect the public we serve. Our associations fully support the draft bill released on November 29, 2018 because it includes the public safety provisions that we have requested.

Respectfully,

Jonathan F. Thompson, Executive Director
National Sheriffs' Association

Sheriff Grady Judd, President
Major County Sheriffs of America

Handwritten signature of Jonathan F. Thompson in black ink.

Handwritten signature of Sheriff Grady Judd in green ink.

Chief J. Thomas Manger, President
Major Cities Chiefs Association

Handwritten signature of Chief J. Thomas Manger in blue ink.