



MAJOR CITIES CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

April 10, 2023

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Peel Region, Ontario
Toronto, Ontario
Vancouver, B.C.
Winnipeg, Manitoba
York Region, Ontario

The Honorable Cory A. Booker
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard J. Durbin
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Sen. Booker and Sen. Durbin,

I'm writing on behalf of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) to register our support for S. 524, the *EQUAL Act*. The MCCA is a professional organization of law enforcement executives representing the largest cities in the United States and Canada.

There currently is an 18:1 sentencing disparity for federal offenses involving crack versus powder cocaine. This means that an individual convicted of an offense involving 28 grams of crack cocaine would face the same mandatory minimum sentence as an individual convicted of a crime involving 500 grams of powder cocaine. This has contributed to racial disparities in the criminal justice system. For example, according to the U.S. Sentencing Commission, in FY 2021, the overwhelming majority (77.6%) of crack cocaine trafficking offenders were Black.¹

S. 524 is an example of legislation that strikes the proper balance between criminal justice reform and public safety. It will make America's criminal justice system fairer and more equitable by eliminating the crack versus powder cocaine sentencing disparity. The bill also includes important guardrails and does not limit law enforcement's ability to hold offenders who represent a significant threat to public safety accountable.

Forty-one states have already eliminated the disparity. This includes all but four states where MCCA members are located. It is time for Congress to follow suit. Addressing the crack versus powder cocaine sentencing disparity is a question of fundamental fairness. This is part of why the *EQUAL Act* had broad, bipartisan support throughout the last Congress. The House overwhelmingly voted by a margin of 361-66 to advance the bill. It also had significant support in the Senate but, unfortunately, never received a vote. The 118th Congress must build on this progress and send the *EQUAL Act* to the President's desk.

¹ "Quick Facts: Crack Cocaine Trafficking Offenses," *U.S. Sentencing Commission*, July 2022. https://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/research-and-publications/quick-facts/Crack_Cocaine_FY21.pdf >

Thank you for your leadership on this critical topic and your continued support of law enforcement. Please do not hesitate to contact me if the MCCA can be of additional assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Eddie Garcia', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eddie Garcia
Chief, Dallas Police Department
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association

CC: The Honorable Christopher A. Coons
The Honorable Lindsey Graham
The Honorable Cynthia M. Lummis
The Honorable Rand Paul
The Honorable Thomas Tillis
The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse



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Calgary, Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta
Montreal, Québec
Ottawa, Ontario
Peel Region, Ontario
Toronto, Ontario
Vancouver, B.C.
Winnipeg, Manitoba
York Region, Ontario

The Honorable Kelly Armstrong
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Don Bacon
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem S. Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Robert C. Scott
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Rep. Armstrong, Leader Jeffries, Rep. Bacon, and Rep. Scott,

I'm writing on behalf of the Major Cities Chiefs Association (MCCA) to register our support for H.R. 1062, the *EQUAL Act*. The MCCA is a professional organization of law enforcement executives representing the largest cities in the United States and Canada.

There currently is an 18:1 sentencing disparity for federal offenses involving crack versus powder cocaine. This means that an individual convicted of an offense involving 28 grams of crack cocaine would face the same mandatory minimum sentence as an individual convicted of a crime involving 500 grams of powder cocaine. This has contributed to racial disparities in the criminal justice system. For example, according to the U.S. Sentencing Commission, in FY 2021, the overwhelming majority (77.6%) of crack cocaine trafficking offenders were Black.¹

H.R. 1062 is an example of legislation that strikes the proper balance between criminal justice reform and public safety. It will make America's criminal justice system fairer and more equitable by eliminating the crack versus powder cocaine sentencing disparity. The bill also includes important guardrails and does not limit law enforcement's ability to hold offenders who represent a significant threat to public safety accountable.

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Chief, Dallas Police Department
President, Major Cities Chiefs Association