



**For Immediate Release
July 15, 2008**

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Campaign for Youth Justice Applauds D.C. Council's Action to Remove Youth from D.C. Jail

Legislation introduced today by Chairman Mendelson and Chairman Wells

Washington, D.C. – Today, the D.C. City Council Judiciary Committee Chairman Phil Mendelson and Human Services Committee Chairman Tommy Wells introduced legislation today to remove youth from the D.C. Jail and to provide judges with more decision-making authority on whether to prosecute youth in the adult criminal court.

“This is vital legislation to ensure the safety and humane treatment of youth,” says Liz Ryan, President and CEO of the Campaign for Youth Justice. “We commend Chairman Mendelson and Chairman Wells for their leadership on this issue.”

The legislation was introduced in response to data and testimony presented at a joint Roundtable on July 14, sponsored by the Judiciary and Human Services Committees. The data, highlighted in the “Report on Youth in the Adult Jail” presented by Fenty Administration officials shows that:

- The data shows that all (or nearly all) of the youth held at the D.C. Jail are youth of color;
- Most of the youth at the jail are not charged with FBI “index crimes”, considered to be the most serious offenses;
- The data shows that only slightly more than half the youth held at the jail had a finding of guilt, suggesting a serious re-examination of the prosecution of youth in the adult criminal justice system.

“The Fenty Administration’s report suggests a need to seriously re-examine the prosecution of so many youth in adult court and placement in the D.C. Jail,” says Ryan. “The legislation introduced today directly responds to these concerns.”

The Campaign for Youth Justice is a national organization dedicated to ending the practice of trying, sentencing and incarcerating youth under the age of 18 in the adult criminal justice system.

For more information, visit: www.campaignforyouthjustice.org.

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