



**For Immediate Release
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Juvenile Justice Organizations and Advocates Applaud Senate Judiciary Members on the Approval of Strong JJDP A Legislation

Washington, D.C. – With strong bi-partisan support, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2008, S. 3155, was passed by the Senate Judiciary Committee. This 30-year old bill will improve both public safety and the lives of youth involved in the juvenile justice system by increasing federal funding to states and localities, as well as improving juvenile justice and delinquency prevention practices. Members of the Juvenile Justice community applaud the efforts of Senators Leahy, Specter, and Kohl and the entire Senate Judiciary Committee for introducing strong legislation to protect our youth.

“We are pleased with the strong legislation that was passed by the Senate Judiciary Committee. We are very excited to work with members of the full Senate body to provide the latest research on this issue as we make significant ground in protecting our young people.”

*Liz Ryan
President and CEO, Campaign for Youth Justice*

“The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act was a landmark achievement when it was enacted by Congress in 1974, and this bill contains some of the most important reforms in more than 30 years. The bill includes major provisions to help states understand racial and ethnic disparities in their juvenile justice systems and how to eliminate those disparities. The bill also contains limited provisions to support state efforts to eliminate dangerous practices that result in abuse of young people in juvenile facilities, and we are pleased with the Senate Judiciary Committee’s amendments that will strengthen those provisions.”

*Mark Soler
Executive Director, Center for Children’s Law and Policy*

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"This reauthorization of the JJDP Act provides a tremendous opportunity to improve the quality of juvenile justice in this country. Keeping children out of adult jails, preventing the incarceration of status offenders, providing treatment and services for children with mental health problems, and rectifying the racial and ethnic disparity in the system will protect children, improve public safety, and save taxpayers money. Congress should strengthen and reauthorize the JJDP Act."

Carol Chodoff
Advocacy Director, Human Rights Watch, US Program

"The Senate mark-up gives hope to hundreds of thousands of court-involved children of color across the U.S. This bill gives tools to local jurisdictions to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system making it a more fair system for all."

Angela Arboleda
Director of Civil Rights and Criminal Justice Policy, National Council of La Raza

"We are excited to support and generate public understanding of this important legislation. It builds substantially on the progress of the JJDP Act by strengthening resources, standards and the federal partnership with states—all for the benefit of children, youth and communities. It is also at its heart, courageous legislation that promotes racial and ethnic fairness in juvenile justice, family and community-connected services, and critical safeguards to support age-appropriate responses, best practices, and rehabilitative conditions in juvenile facilities. "

Nancy Gannon Hornberger
Executive Director, Coalition for Juvenile Justice

"S. 3155 takes a comprehensive approach to strengthening state juvenile systems, promotes standards, programs and practices proven to be effective and keeps youths in juvenile facilities. The changes to the JJDP Act will enhance the states' abilities to protect public safety, hold youths accountable and provide rehabilitation services that prevent future crime."

Edward J. Loughran
Executive Director, Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators (CJCA)
Former Massachusetts Department of Youth Services Commissioner

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.