CONFRONTING RECIDIVISM: PRISONER RE-ENTRY PROGRAMS AND A JUST FUTURE FOR ALL AMERICANS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

FEBRUARY 2, 2005

Serial No. 109–10

Printed for the use of the Committee on Government Reform

Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.gpo.gov/congress/house
http://www.house.gov/reform

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

20–377 PDF WASHINGTON : 2005

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402–0001

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, Virginia, *Chairman*

CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, Connecticut
DAN BURTON, Indiana
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Florida
JOHN M. MCHUGH, New York
JOHN L. MICA, Florida
GIL GUTKNECHT, Minnesota
MARK E. SOUDER, Indiana
STEVEN C. LATOURETTE, Ohio
TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, Pennsylvania
CHRIS CANNON, Utah
JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR., Tennessee
CANDICE S. MILLER, Michigan
MICHAEL R. TURNER, Ohio
KATHERINE HARRIS, Florida
DARRELL E. ISSA, California
GINNY BROWN-WAITE, Florida
JON C. PORTER, Nevada
KENNY MARCHANT, Texas
LYNN A. WESTMORELAND, Georgia
PATRICK T. MCHENRY, North Carolina
CHARLES W. DENT, Pennsylvania
VIRGINIA FOXX, North Carolina

HENRY A. WAXMAN, California
TOM LANTOS, California
MAJOR R. OWENS, New York
EDOLPHUS TOWNS, New York
PAUL E. KANJORSKI, Pennsylvania
CAROLYN B. MALONEY, New York
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, Maryland
DENNIS J. KUCINICH, Ohio
DANNY K. DAVIS, Illinois
WM. LACY CLAY, Missouri
DIANE E. WATSON, California
STEPHEN F. LYNCH, Massachusetts
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, Maryland
LINDA T. SANCHEZ, California
C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER, Maryland
BRIAN HIGGINS, New York
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, District of Columbia

BERNARD SANDERS, Vermont (Independent)

MELISSA WOJCIAK, *Staff Director*
DAVID MARIN, *Deputy Staff Director/Communications Director*
ROB BORDEN, *Parliamentarian*
TERESA AUSTIN, *Chief Clerk*
PHIL BARNETT, *Minority Chief of Staff/Chief Counsel*

CONTENTS

	Page
Hearing held on February 2, 2005	1
Statement of:	
Davis, Hon. Danny, a Representative in Congress from the State of Illinois	32
Nolan, Pat, Prison Fellowship; Joseph Williams, Transition of Prisoners; Chaplain Robert Toney, Angola Prison, Louisiana; Frederick A. Davie, senior vice president of public policy, Public/Private Ventures; and George A.H. Williams, Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities	88
Davie, Frederick A.	112
Nolan, Pat	88
Williams, George A.H.	117
Williams, Joseph	100
Portman, Hon. Rob, a Representative in Congress from the State of Ohio	20
Wilkinson, Reginald A., Ed.D., Ohio Rehabilitation and Corrections Agency; Lorna Hogan, mother advocate, the Rebecca Project for Human Rights, Washington, DC; Felix Mata, Baltimore City's Ex-Offender Initiative, Mayor's Office of Employment Development; Paul A. Quander, District of Columbia Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency; and Jim McNeil and David Russell, mentor and protege in the Innerchange Freedom Initiate	37
Hogan, Lorna	53
McNeil, Jim	72
Mata, Felix	58
Quander, Paul A., Jr.	63
Russell, David	75
Wilkinson, Reginald A.	37
Letters, statements, etc., submitted for the record by:	
Cummings, Hon. Elijah E., a Representative in Congress from the State of Maryland, prepared statement of	8
Davie, Frederick A., senior vice president of public policy, Public/Private Ventures, prepared statement of	114
Hogan, Lorna, mother advocate, the Rebecca Project for Human Rights, Washington, DC, prepared statement of	55
Mata, Felix, Baltimore City's Ex-Offender Initiative, Mayor's Office of Employment Development, prepared statement of	60
McNeil, Jim, mentor and protege in the Innerchange Freedom Initiate, prepared statement of	73
Nolan, Pat, Prison Fellowship, prepared statement of	93
Portman, Hon. Rob, a Representative in Congress from the State of Ohio, prepared statement of	26
Quander, Paul A., District of Columbia Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, prepared statement of	66
Russell, David, mentor and protege in the Innerchange Freedom Initiate, prepared statement of	77
Souder, Hon. Mark E., a Representative in Congress from the State of Indiana, prepared statement of	4
Toney, Chaplain Robert, Angola Prison, Louisiana, information concerning Louisiana State Penitentiary	111
Wilkinson, Reginald A., Ed.D., Ohio Rehabilitation and Corrections Agency, prepared statement of	41
Williams, George A.H., Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, prepared statement of	119
Williams, Joseph, Transition of Prisoners, prepared statement of	103

CONFRONTING RECIDIVISM: PRISONER REENTRY PROGRAMS AND A JUST FUTURE FOR ALL AMERICANS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:07 p.m., in room 2247, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Mark E. Souder presiding.

Present: Representatives Souder, Shays, Harris, Porter, Westmoreland, McHenry, Dent, Cummings, Davis of Illinois, Clay, Watson, Ruppersberger and Norton.

Staff present: Marc Wheat, staff director and counsel; Brandon Lerch, professional staff member; Nick Coleman, professional staff member and counsel; Pat DeQuattro and Dave Thomasson, congressional fellows; Malia Holst, clerk; Earley Green, minority chief clerk; Jean Gosa, minority assistant clerk; and Tony Haywood, minority counsel.

Mr. SOUDER. The Subcommittee on Criminal Justice will now come to order. Actually, this is a full committee hearing. Although this topic has been set up under the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, it is a full committee hearing; and I appreciate Chairman Davis as well as Ranking Member Henry Waxman allowing us to move ahead, even though our committee hasn't been fully organized yet this year. So while I presume I will continue to be chairman of this subcommittee, it is not yet official.

So good afternoon. I thank all of you for being here. Particular thanks to the many witnesses who have traveled great distances to be here.

The impetus for this hearing is owed to the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Rob Portman, and the gentleman from Illinois, a longtime member of this subcommittee, an active member, Danny Davis. Their leadership has brought the issue of prisoner reentry to the fore of domestic policy.

Many thanks as well to the gentleman from Maryland, Elijah Cummings. With so much activity swirling around us at the beginning of the 109th Congress, many schedules are quite full. But Mr. Cummings' commitment to this issue has helped to bring us together today, and for that I am grateful.

Crime statistics have been debated for decades, but not until recently have these debates included the crisis of recidivism. Thanks certainly is owed to the two Members of Congress testifying today

for raising the profile of this issue, but much of the credit is owed to those who have been in the recidivism trenches for years.

After more than a decade of tough crime policies, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, over 2 million Americans are held in Federal, State or county jails. Over 4 million Americans are on parole or probation.

It should be surprising to no one that well over half a million inmates are being released every year. Logical questions arise: Where do these people go? What job skills do they have? Who hires them? Are they rehabilitated? The answers to these questions are not very encouraging.

Many of those paroled and released inmates will return to prison within 3 years. According to the Government Accountability Office, in 1998, the percentage of reincarcerations among all admissions at State and Federal prisons was 35 percent, up from 17 percent in 1980. Broader surveys show recidivism rates of nearly two-thirds of all inmates.

Representing a revolving door in the American justice system, this recidivism rate indicates a massive failure of the penal system to return law-abiding citizens to society. The first failure is clearly inmates themselves, many of whom enjoy few advantages and bear many burdens upon their release.

Second, however, the system also fails the American public. Indeed, many released inmates will commit violent crimes on innocent victims.

The government institutions and faith-based and community organizations addressing recidivism are addressing one question: How do we reform a system whose participants often return to the same old behavior which the system was originally designed to deter?

As more States and more community and faith-based groups address recidivism, the need for a national strategy becomes clearer. Moreover, the recent Booker Supreme Court decision on sentencing guidelines may result in the release of many more prisoners than otherwise expected.

The U.S. Department of Justice Young Offender Initiative, for instance, provides grants for State and community cooperation in parolee supervision and accountability. At the State level, Texas is considering placing its inmate release programs with the InnerChange Freedom Initiative, which already runs numerous programs in cooperation with the State.

The witnesses assembled today have all brought down the rate of recidivism by making better men and women of released prisoners. All of them are heroes in our eyes.

Today we will learn more about national strategies from two expert Members of Congress and a host of State, local and private sector leaders. We will have policymakers on the same panel with a current parolee and his mentor.

On another panel, we will have reentry program graduates and reentry program leaders. We will also hear from a prison chaplain

who leads this vital reentry work from the moment inmates began their sentences.

Thank you again for being here today. I look forward to hearing more about recidivism from our experts with us today.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Mark E. Souder follows:]

"Confronting Recidivism: Prisoner Re-entry Programs and a Just Future for All Americans"

Opening Statement of Congressman Mark Souder

Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
September 22, 2004

Good afternoon and thank you all for being here. Particular thanks to our many witnesses who have traveled great distances to be here.

The impetus of this hearing is owed to the Gentleman from Ohio, Rob Portman and the Gentleman from Illinois, Danny Davis. Their leadership has brought the issue of prisoner reentry to the fore of domestic policy. I also would like to thank the full Committee Chairman, Tom Davis, and Ranking Minority member Henry Waxman, for their work in making this hearing possible today.

My thanks go as well to the Gentleman from Maryland, Elijah Cummings. With so much activity swirling around us at the beginning of the 109th Congress, many schedules are quite full. But Mr. Cummings commitment to this issue has helped to bring us together today. For that I am grateful.

Crime statistics have been debated for decades, but not until recently have these debates included the crisis of recidivism. Thanks certainly is owed to the two Members of Congress testifying today for raising the profile of the issue, but much of the credit is owed to those who have been in the recidivism trenches for years.

After more than a decade of tough crime policies, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, over 2 million Americans are held in Federal state or county jails. Over 4 million Americans are on parole or probation.

And it should be surprising to no one that well over half a million inmates are being released every year. Logical questions arise, "Where do these people go? What job skills do they have? Who hires them? Are they rehabilitated?" The answers to these questions are not very encouraging.

Many of these paroled and released inmates will return to prison within three years. According to the Government Accountability Office, in 1998 the percentage of re-incarcerations among all admissions at state and federal prisons was 35%, up from 17% in 1980. Broader surveys show a recidivism rate of nearly two-thirds of all inmates.

The first failure clearly is to the inmates themselves, many of whom enjoy few advantages and bear many burdens upon their release. Secondly, however, the system also fails the American public. Indeed, many released inmates will commit violent crimes on innocent victims.

The government institutions and faith-based and community addressing recidivism are addressing one question, "How do we reform a system whose participants often return to the same old behavior which the system was originally designed to deter?"

As more states, and more community-and faith-based groups address recidivism, the need for a national strategy becomes clearer. Moreover, the recent *Booker* Supreme Court decision on sentencing guidelines may result in the release of many more prisoners than otherwise expected.

The U.S. Department of Justice Young Offender Initiative, for instance, provides grants for state and community cooperation in parolee supervision and accountability. At the state level, Texas is considering placing its inmate release programs with the InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI), which already runs numerous programs in cooperation with the state.

The witnesses assembled today, have all brought down the rate of recidivism by making better men and women of released prisoners. All of them are heroes in our eyes.

Today we will learn more about national strategies from two expert Members of Congress and a host of state, local and private sector leaders. We will have policy makers on the same panel with a current parolee and his mentor.

On another panel we will have reentry program graduates and reentry program leaders. We will also here from a prison Chaplain who leads this vital reentry work from the moment inmates begin their sentences.

Thank you again for being here today. I look forward to hearing more about recidivism from our experts who are with us today.

Mr. SOUDER. Now I would like to yield to Criminal Justice Subcommittee Ranking Member Elijah Cummings of Maryland.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman; and I thank you for holding today's hearing on prisoner reentry, one of the most profound challenges facing America today.

On any given day in America, as many as 2 million men and women are incarcerated in Federal and State prisons and local jails, more than 80 percent of whom are involved in substance use. In 1996 alone, taxpayers spent over $30 billion to incarcerate these individuals, who are the parents of 2.4 million children. A fourfold increase in incarceration rates over the past 25 years, largely a result of efforts to protect communities from drugs and violent crime, has spawned problems and challenges of its own.

Each year, 630,000 individuals leave State and Federal prisons and return home. All too often, they are ill-equipped to fully participate and constructively as members of families and communities to whom they return. The reentry or reintegration into civil society of these individuals represents an enormous challenge that requires the involvement of multiple layers and sectors of society.

Inmates often leave prison with little preparation for life on the outside or assistance in their reintegration, increasing the likelihood they will be returned to prison for a new crime or parole violation. This cycle of removal and return of large numbers of young adults, mostly men, is especially pronounced in communities that are already experiencing enormous social and economic disadvantages.

The importance of prisoner reentry as a societal concern in my State of Maryland cannot be overstated. In 2001, 9,448 people were released from Maryland prisons. That is nearly twice the number released two decades ago. During 2001, 97 percent of all men and women released from Maryland prisons returned to communities in Maryland. Of those prisoners who returned to Maryland, well over 59 percent returned to one jurisdiction in the State, Baltimore City. The flow of prisoners was further concentrated in a small number of communities within Baltimore City, many of them in my district.

A recent study showed that 30 percent of the 4,411 released prisoners who returned to Baltimore City returned to just 6 of 55 communities. These high-concentration community areas in Baltimore, which already face great social and economic disadvantages, may experience reentry costs to a magnified degree. In addition, while these numbers represent individuals released from Maryland prisons after serving sentences of 1 year or more, it is important to note that approximately 5,000 additional inmates are released to Baltimore City each year after having served jail time, typically less than 1 year.

Release presents offenders with a difficult transition from the structured environment of the prison or jail. Many prisoners after release have no place to live, no job, family or social support. They often lack the knowledge and skills to access available resources for adjustment to life on the outside, all factors that significantly increase the risk of relapse and recidivism. In addition, legal measures designed to create disincentives for drug abuse and crime can complicate efforts to reestablish a foothold in society.

In recent years, the high rate of recidivism has generated broad-based interest in finding effective ways to address prisoner reentry issues across many sectors of society. For its part, Congress has authorized nearly $100 million for reentry initiatives involving various agencies.

Our first two witnesses today are colleagues who have worked on a bipartisan basis to produce legislation that will renew and improve Federal reentry programs. I would like to commend both Representative Rob Portman and Representative Danny Davis for their attention and commitment to this very serious issue of reentry and for your work on your legislation that has garnered support from many quarters. It is encouraging to see this problem, which affects my district so severely, being recognized so broadly and addressed on a bipartisan basis.

I supported H.R. 4676 as a cosponsor in the last Congress, and I intend to do the same when it is reintroduced in this Congress. I would be remiss not to say, however, that there are serious impediments to successful reentry that are not addressed in this bill. Some of them are of Congress' own creation. The Federal student aid ban, which denies education aid to applicants who have been convicted of a drug crime, is but one of these. We have discussed it at length in this committee. I hope that, as this bill moves forward, we can work together to make it as comprehensive as we can. A comprehensive approach to reentry will provide ex-offenders their best chance to become full and constructive participants in our society, while making our communities safer.

To help us understand the challenges of reentry and the strategies that are being employed to address them, we have a diverse panel of witnesses who include representatives of government agencies, service providers, ex-offenders, mentors and advocates. I would like to thank all of our witnesses for their participation in today's hearing and extend a particular welcome to Mr. Felix Mata, who manages Baltimore City's Ex-Offender Task Force on behalf of our mayor, Mayor O'Malley.

I look forward to the testimony of all of our witnesses, Mr. Chairman, and, with that, I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Elijah E. Cummings follows:]

Opening Statement of Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, D-Maryland Hearing on "Confronting Recidivism: Prisoner Reentry Programs and a Just Future for All Americans" Committee on Government Reform

February 1, 2005

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for holding today's hearing on prisoner reentry, one of the most profound challenges facing American society today.

On any given day in America, as many as 2 million men and women are incarcerated in federal and state prisons and local jails, more than 80 percent of whom are involved in substance use. In 1996 alone, taxpayers spent over $30 billion to incarcerate these individuals -- who are the parents of 2.4 million children. A fourfold increase in incarceration rates over the

past 25 years – largely a result of efforts to protect communities from drugs and violent crime –has spawned problems and challenges of its own.

Each year, 630,000 individuals leave state and federal prisons and return home. All too often they are ill-equipped to participate fully and constructively as members of families and communities to whom they return. The "reentry" or reintegration into civil society of these individuals represents an enormous challenge that requires the involvement of multiple layers and sectors of society.

Inmates often leave prison with little preparation for life on the outside or assistance in their reintegration, increasing the likelihood that they will be returned to prison for new crimes or parole violations. This cycle of removal and return of large numbers of young adults, mostly men, is especially pronounced in

communities that are already experiencing enormous social and economic disadvantage.

The importance of prisoner reentry as a societal concern in my state of Maryland cannot be overstated. In 2001, 9,448 people were released from Maryland prisons. That's nearly twice the number released two decades ago. During 2001, 97 percent of all men and women released from Maryland prisons returned to communities in Maryland. Of those prisoners who returned to Maryland, well over half (59%) returned to one jurisdiction in the state, Baltimore City, and the flow of prisoners was further concentrated in a small number of communities within Baltimore City.

A recent study showed that 30 percent of the 4,411 released prisoners who returned to Baltimore City returned to just 6 of 55 communities. These high-concentration community areas in Baltimore, which already face great social and economic disadvantages,

may experience reentry costs to a magnified degree. In addition, while these numbers represent individuals released from Maryland prisons after serving sentences of one year or more, it is important to note that approximately 5,000 additional inmates are released to Baltimore City each year after having served jail time (typically less than a year).

Release presents offenders with a difficult transition from the structured environment of the prison or jail. Many prisoners after release have no place to live, no job, and no family or social supports. They often lack the knowledge and skills to access available resources for adjustment to life on the outside, all factors that significantly increase the risk of relapse and recidivism. In addition, legal measures designed to create disincentives for drug abuse and crime can complicate efforts to reestablish a foothold in society.

In recent years, the high rate of recidivism (particularly among serious and violent offenders) has generated broad-based interest in finding effective ways to address prisoner reentry issues across many sectors of society. For its part, Congress has authorized nearly $100 million for reentry initiatives involving various agencies.

Our first two witnesses today are colleagues who have worked on a bipartisan basis to produce legislation that would renew and improve federal reentry programs, and I'd like to commend both Representative Rob Portman and Representative Danny Davis for their attention and commitment to this very serious issue of reentry and for your work on legislation that has garnered support from many quarters. It is encouraging to see that this problem, which affects my district so severely, being recognized so broadly and addressed on a bipartisan basis. I supported H.R. 4676 as a cosponsor in the last

Congress and I intend to do the same when it is reintroduced in this Congress.

I would be remiss not to say, however, that there are serious impediments to successful reentry that are not addressed in this bill – some of them of Congress's own creation. The federal student aid ban, which denies education aid to applicants who have been convicted of a drug crime, is but one of these and we have discussed it at length in this Committee. I hope that, as this bill moves forward, we can work together to make it as comprehensive as it can be. A comprehensive approach to reentry will provide ex-offenders their best chance to become full and constructive participants in our society while making our communities safer.

To help us understand the challenges of reentry and the strategies that are being employed to address them, we have a diverse panel of witnesses who include representatives of government agencies, service providers, ex-

offenders, mentors, and advocates. I'd like to thank all of our witnesses for their participation in today's hearing and extend a particular welcome to Mr. Felix Mata who manages Baltimore City's Ex-Offender Task Force on behalf of Mayor O'Malley.

I look forward to the testimony of all of our witnesses, Mr. Chairman, and yield back my remaining time.

Mr. SOUDER. Let me first, before I see if further Members have opening statements, since it is our first hearing of the year and we have, as I mentioned earlier, not organized and won't be until next week officially, introduce a number of our Republican Members, three of whom are new to Congress.

Congresswoman Harris has been a member of this committee for some time. Welcome. Congressman McHenry from North Carolina. Congressman Westmoreland from Georgia. Congressman Porter, who has been a member of the committee before, from Nevada. Congressman Dent from Pennsylvania. Welcome to our committee.

On the Democratic side, these are our stalwarts on the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice. In addition to Ranking Member Mr. Cummings, Mr. Ruppersberger of Maryland, our delegate and honorable representative from the District of Columbia, Eleanor Holmes Norton, who has been very active in this committee, and Mr. Clay from Missouri. We thank you all for your leadership.

Congresswoman Harris, do you have any opening comments?

Ms. HARRIS. Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, and thank you for scheduling this hearing on such an important issue.

Before I begin, I want to commend you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the committee on your vision and aggressiveness concerning this issue, and I also want to applaud Congressman Rob Portman for his outstanding leadership as well. Together, we will produce safer communities and neighborhoods for our families.

I had the opportunity to testify before Judiciary as a witness with Congressman Portman in the last congressional session, because criminals who have used society's second chances to commit further crimes have an undeniable effect on our communities, and tragically their actions often affect our most vulnerable citizens, our children.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, of the more than 272,000 persons released from prisons in 15 States in 1994, an estimated 67.5 percent were rearrested for felonies or serious misdemeanors 3 years later. Almost one-half were reconvicted. These numbers point to a deeply troubling trend in our criminal justice system; and, more disturbing, a Department of Justice study indicates that sex offenders are four times more likely to be rearrested for sex crimes than non-sex offenders.

Last year, in my congressional district, we experienced an unspeakable tragedy that was allegedly caused by a repeat offender. A young girl, an 11-year-old, Carlie Brucia, was kidnapped, brutally raped and murdered. Following the arrest of Carlie's accused murder, we learned that this man should have been behind bars when the crime took place. He possessed a long history of criminal activity, including conviction for aggravated battery. He had been arrested 13 times and placed on probation three times since 1993. In fact, he was in police custody on an unrelated cause when he was linked to this crime.

In response to this tragedy, I introduced legislation entitled Carlie's Law during the 108th Congress. This bill would have expanded the grounds for mandatory revocation of probation and supervised release, encompass violent felony crimes or an offense intended to facilitate unlawful sexual contact with a minor.

While we must ensure that dangerous criminals remain where they belong, in prison, I also strongly believe we must offer more opportunities for rehabilitation. Prisoners must have the opportunity to do more than sit idly. That is why I support giving prisoners the opportunity to learn a skill and achieve their GED.

The bill that Congressman Portman introduced in the 108th Congress proposed a comprehensive grant program consisting of educational, vocational and rehabilitation opportunities for individuals that are reentering society. This legislation continues to create a meaningful effort to reduce criminal recidivism.

We might also attack this crisis by learning from outstanding successes in State and local programs. Sheriff Charlie Wells in Manatee County, FL, has operated a successful boot camp for juvenile repeat offenders since 1993. This program includes a tough physical and academic regime that focuses on rehabilitation, not abuse, and for over 10 years the Camp has reformed 55 percent of its repeat juvenile offenders.

So as we focus on examples like this and programs across the Nation, I think we can make tremendous progress in battling criminal recidivism and focusing heavily on these issues relating to security in the 109th Congress.

Let us remember that nothing is more fundamental to this Nation than the ability of our children to walk and run and play in our communities without fear. For this reason, I look forward to this committee on the issue of criminal recidivism and prisoner reentry programs to reduce the likelihood that convicted offenders become repeat offenders.

Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Ruppersberger.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Chairman, thank you for having this hearing on a very important issue. Congressman Cummings, thank you for your dedication.

I also want to acknowledge Congressmen Portman and Davis. It is great to see a Republican and Democrat sitting together at the table, working together to help resolve this issue.

Obviously we need to do something, because the current system that we have right now just is not working. I was a former prosecutor, and I understand the burden that recidivism creates on local law enforcement and on all of our local governments. In fact, all levels of government must increase the priority of combating recidivism and create new and innovative ways to help prisoners or people who have been arrested before if we are to be successful.

As Baltimore County executive in the State of Maryland, I would say, when I had that position, Elijah Cummings was one of my Congressmen. We developed two programs that I would like to just briefly talk about, because I think it is so important when we have a hearing we talk about solutions, and I think that is what you are here today to talk about.

The first program was the Police Athletic League. We made a policy decision to put a Police Athletic League in every precinct in our county. Our county has less than 800,000 people. As a result of having the police and our recreation and parks working together in a non-combative way with police officers, we were able, after the program got started, to get 5,000 juveniles off the street.

In order to be able to get the kids or children that we really needed to get off the street, we developed a program with karate, because then the tough guys would want to come and learn karate. Once you get them in that program, you hook them, you develop leadership skills, you work with them on all sorts of problems that we needed to deal with.

It is important that we deal with an issue before it gets to the point where someone is going to commit a murder, armed robbery or whatever.

There was another program that was extremely successful called the Juvenile Offenders in Need of Supervision. What we found is there is such a burden on all of the people involved in the criminal justice system, parole officers who might have 500 clients and all they can do is just check in, have them check in and say what are you doing, there is no rehabilitation, helping to get jobs, dealing with issues involving drugs.

This Offenders in Need of Supervision Program was a program where the police officers, as soon as an arrest would be made, would jump on the case, would bring a teen in, if that individual happened to be in school or work or whatever, bring them in, bring the parents in, and work with them so that they could get to them before they would get to the next level. That program was extremely successful. Monitoring that program, that made a tremendous difference in the rate of recidivism.

I bring up two programs like that, because whatever we need to do, we have to have the right program, we need to hold the people in the program accountable for the funding, and then we need to move forward.

The other issue, if we are going to deal with the issue of priorities, we have to fund priorities, and we cannot discount the fact that drugs is an important issue. I think the statistics say now between 75 and 80 percent of all violent crime is drug-related. If we don't deal with the issue of drugs and rehabilitation, we are going to continue to have this problem.

Unfortunately, I have another hearing I have to go to, so I look forward to hearing about this hearing. I really think this is very important, and I again appreciate Congressmen Portman and Davis being here, and I look forward to your involvement in this issue. Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. I was afraid your phone call was from the Intelligence Committee, but they would probably use a laser to zap you.

Delegate Norton.

Ms. NORTON. I want to thank you, Chairman Souder, because you have begun this session with an issue of prime importance to our country, a rising issue in the Congress, an issue that has arisen and thundered into the States who have primary jurisdiction over criminal matters.

I want to thank Mr. Cummings for his leadership. It has been constant on these issues, because he lives so closely with these issues and has thought innovatively about them.

The partnership between Mr. Portman and Mr. Davis is going to be important for anything we are able to do on this issue in the Congress, so I appreciate that, by working together, you have started us in just the right way.

Mr. Chairman, this is the other side of the law and order equation. As you know from elementary algebra, both sides of the equation have to be in equipoise, and you keep working on it until you get it right from the time you are in the 6th grade. Well, we forgot about this side altogether. What this side is about is that these men and women are going to come here and live right alongside you and me in the communities that have seen them incarcerated.

Everyone understands why the emphasis on law and order had to take place and has to continue to take place, particularly as this phase began in the early 1990's with a huge outbreak in crime. Everybody, particularly those who live in the inner city, were afraid of it. The first thing you do is try to get those who are responsible for that. That will always be the case.

In many ways, there was a pronounced overreaction, especially in the Congress. The first results were irrational mandatory minimums, sentencing guidelines that are so extreme that the Supreme Court of the United States has now thrown them out. That happened after some of the most conservative justices on the court began to speak openly about how the criminal justice system was producing rank injustice, and here they were talking about mandatory minimums in the Federal system.

Mr. Chairman, a felony conviction, deserved or not—and I am the first to concede that most of these convictions are deserved. It is too bad we haven't learned how to work as we must before people get such convictions. But a felony conviction is close to a death sentence in the job market, and everything else falls in the wake of the member of the family or the community that has that death sentence, those who would be dependent upon him and, ultimately, the community in which he lives.

I say "he," because while there is a growing number of women incarcerated, something about the socialization of women makes women less inclined to be in prison. So the rates have grown largely with respect to men. And if I may just put on the record who those men are, almost half of the men in prison are African American men. The effects of their incarceration and over-incarceration has been absolutely devastating to the African American family.

Minimally, society that imposes employment death sentences on people has an obligation, if they don't care about the men and the women, to protect the rest of us. Even as you protected us by putting them behind jail, for goodness sake, protect us when they get out of jail. Because if indeed you get out of jail with nothing and nobody to help you, the last thing you knew how to do was the occupation that got you back in jail, and I can assure you that men who don't have any other way to live will find their way to that occupation if society does what we do.

This is what we do. We say, you have a drug conviction and you are a kid and you got it when you were 17 years old? No Pell grants. Sorry. We know you were young. We know things may be better. A life sentence on getting you even to a community college with a Pell Grant. Out of jail, done your time. You say, for goodness' sake, I never want to see the inside of that again.

And if you have been in Federal prison, you may have even learned a vocation. And what do you find? A whole set of occupa-

tions from which you are barred. Some of those occupations you trained for in prison.

You want to be a barber? Many States say, not here.

I am not sure what that has to do with most convictions. Got out and said, I got to find some way to improve my citizenship, and the first thing you find is you are a felon and in one-third of the States of the United States we are going to say to you, you will not be able to vote now, not in 5 years, not forever. And you wonder why there is great bitterness and anger with people who served their time and just want some way out of all of this and find society offering them other kinds of sentences.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Norton, if you can kind of——

Ms. NORTON. I feel this very deeply. You called a hearing. I will go more rapidly.

Because the greatest impact and the reason I feel so passionately, Mr. Chairman, is because of an issue I think we share with you and with others across the aisle, and that is the impact on the African American family.

I live in the communities Mr. Cummings does, where 70 percent of the children are being raised by African American women alone, and these children go into the streets, no jobs, only drugs and crime available as opportunities for employment, and they go the way of their fathers. The over-incarceration of a whole generation of black men has condemned millions of American children, especially children of color, to poverty.

The States, Mr. Chairman, are rebelling, largely because they are the ones that had to house most of these inmates, and the high costs were such that they began to look for other ways out. They have given us leadership on special diversion for first-time drug offenders with drug courts, and we need to follow suit for what the States are doing in this regard.

You have Mr. Paul Quander here from the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, which has jurisdiction in the District of Columbia, because our inmates, our felon inmates, are in Federal prisons, in the Federal prison system, and what it does for inmates afterwards is the best in the United States. I am very pleased you invited him here.

Mr. Chairman, I hope you have started something by the way you have started off the 109th Congress. Thank you for your indulgence.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

We are joined by Congressman Shays, the vice chairman of the full committee, a subcommittee chair here. Thank you for coming.

Mr. SHAYS. Thank you. I know we need to get started. I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Cummings for having this hearing.

It would be nice to deal with what is really a scandalous issue on a bipartisan basis, and I feel the passion that Ms. Norton feels and I understand it, and it is deserved.

I just want to thank Danny Davis and Rob Portman for also acting on a very bipartisan basis for something that truly is scandalous. It is a solvable problem, and it is something we should be able to do with a lot of heart, emotion and common sense.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Clay.

Mr. CLAY. Thank you. I have a brief statement.

I would like to thank you and Ranking Member Cummings for holding this hearing on an issue of critical importance, and that is reducing the recidivism rate. I am hopeful that our distinguished panelists will offer constructive and thoughtful proposals on how the Federal Government can be an effective partner in helping ex-offenders successfully reintegrate into communities.

According to recent reports, over 630,000 people will complete their sentences and be released into society this year. It has been estimated that approximately two out of every three people released from prison in the United States are rearrested within 3 years of their release.

Given the record number of ex-inmates leaving prisons and returning to communities, it is imperative that Congress focus on ways to reintegrate ex-offenders and close the revolving door of the American prison system. The billions spent on corrections expenditures and the costs imposed on society make it blatantly clear that successful reentry would ensure both safer communities and a more efficient use of tax dollars.

I am hopeful that this hearing will provide Congress an opportunity to reshape our policies and address issues such as the lifetime ban from receiving welfare, food stamps, college tuition assistance and public housing assistance. These policies make it very difficult for prisoners to reintegrate into society and make it more likely that they will return to a life of crime.

We can genuinely give prisoners a second chance at successful reintegration into society by rescinding counterproductive laws. It is my hope that we can broaden the discussion and address proposals that will lead to a more effective system.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and yield back.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much.

Before proceeding, I would like to take care of a couple of procedural matters. I would ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to submit written statements and questions for the hearing record, that any answers to written questions provided by the witnesses also be included in the record.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

I also ask unanimous consent that all exhibits, documents and others materials referred to by the Members and the witnesses may be included in the hearing record and that all Members be permitted to revise and extend their remarks.

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Our first panel is composed of our colleagues, Representative Rob Portman and Representative Danny Davis. By tradition, we do not administer an oath to Members of Congress, because we just took one a month ago. As an oversight committee, we generally swear in all of our witnesses. We are exempt. We presume your other oath binds you here.

Mr. Portman, thank you for your long-time leadership on this issue. Thank you for being patient this afternoon.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROB PORTMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OHIO

Mr. PORTMAN. Thank you, Chairman Souder.

We are honored to be here to testify before you today on prisoner reentry and also reducing recidivism, and we commend you for raising the profile of this issue, for providing a forum to discuss this issue.

I also have to comment that we also appreciate the expertise of your subcommittee and full committee. Just looking around the room, we have worked closely with Ranking Member Cummings over the years on drug prevention, community coalitions, some of the issues related, as Mr. Ruppersberger pointed out, to this issue; and I appreciated hearing from him again this afternoon, as well as other members of your committee.

I will say, the legislation we are about to discuss does not have the answers to all of our problems. It does not include every provision that everyone on this panel or certainly in this room would want, and you will hear probably about that during the testimony from the experts who follow us. But it is an important step in the right direction.

With the specific reference, Mr. Cummings, to the student aid ban, I think you will be pleased with the way we address it. We want to work with you on that. We plan on reintroducing the bill, as you know, next week. We worked closely with you and Mr. Souder last year on that, and I think we can address at least most of your concern with regard to how the student aid ban would operate, that the infraction would occur not prior to but during the time Federal aid was being provided. So we can talk about that. But I think, although this bill will not address every concern raised today, that one I hope you will find it to be satisfactory.

We appreciated working with Mrs. Harris last year on Carlie's Law. We included some of those provisions. We are working with her again this year.

Ms. Norton raised some great points that I think you will find we address in this legislation with regard to recidivism and families, and that is an important part of this legislation.

Mr. Shays has been an expert on these issues and a leader, and we appreciate the fact the vice chair of the full committee is here, because that will help your committee deal with these issues.

Mr. Clay talked about the partnership. That is really what this bill is about, the Federal Government being a better partner. It is not the Federal Government stepping in to our local communities and solving our problems, but it is providing that leverage, we hope, at the State and local level and with community organizations, even faith-based groups, to be able to better handle this problem.

Prisoner reentry is about reducing and preventing crime, but it is also, as Ms. Norton said, about restoring lives. Our view is we need to be both tough on crime but also smart on crime. We think this legislation has that balance. We need to be tough in keeping dangerous felons from returning and committing new crimes, but we also need to be smart in making sure that those who are coming home are given the most basic chance to start a new life and turn away from crime.

You all talked about the numbers here this afternoon, and I won't get into great detail on that, but just now over 2 million people being incarcerated, 97 percent of those people are going to get

out of prison, and that is whether or not the Supreme Court changes what the sentencing guidelines are or not. People are going to get out of prison.

As we talked about today, about 650,000 are being released from incarceration into our communities every year. Think about that, 650,000 people coming into our communities. So these reentry into community—these reentry numbers mean that we are all affected by it.

Its success or failure has incredible implications for public safety, for the welfare of children, for family reunification, for our growing fiscal issues, and for community health. By doing a better job on offender reentry, we can prevent crimes, we can help strengthen our communities, and we can save taxpayer money.

Unfortunately, according to recent data from the Department of Justice, as you have heard today, about two-thirds of those released from prison will be rearrested within 3 years. First and foremost, this offender reentry, then, is about preventing crime and keeping our communities safe, to try to reduce the high rates of recidivism. That will translate into, of course, thousands of new victims each year if we don't do something about it.

The social and economic costs of a 67 percent recidivism rate is astounding. As Mr. Shays said, it is a crisis. It is one we need to get our hands around.

Last session, we worked closely with colleagues on this subcommittee to help our States and communities better address the problem through this Second Chance Act. It is a bipartisan approach. It helps to better coordinate at the Federal level our Federal agencies and policies on prisoner reentry. It also increases the support to States and to community organizations to address this growing population of ex-offenders who are returning to our communities.

The main focuses in the bill are four-fold: One, jobs; two, housing; three, substance abuse and mental health treatment; and, four, support for families.

I want to express my sincere thanks to you, Mr. Chairman, for working with us closely last year and putting together some good legislation and being an original cosponsor.

I also want to thank Representative Danny Davis, my partner in this, who did a terrific job in helping to put together a good, sensible, balanced bill, and also helped us to be able to be sure that this bill had balance in terms of its bipartisan cosponsorship.

Elijah Cummings was one of our cosponsors last year, which was really critical in his role in our caucus and in the Black Caucus to move this forward. I want to thank him again on this subcommittee for his work.

Also, Representative Platts on this subcommittee, Representative Cannon, Representative Owens and others who cosponsored the Second Chance Act last year.

We plan to reintroduce the bill next week, and Danny Davis may talk a little more about that. But we hope we can again have a strong cosponsorship from this subcommittee and committee working toward getting this marked up this year and getting it to the President's desk for signature.

The primary goal, as I said, is public safety in this bill. It makes funds available to conduct studies to determine who is returning to jail or prison, why they are returning, which present the greatest risk to community safety. This is data we don't have, and we need it.

The bill also helps in development of procedures to assist relevant authorities in determining when release is appropriate, when it is not appropriate, and the use of data to inform this released decision.

Again, that data is not there now. This would include the use of proven assessment tools to assess the risk factors for returning inmates and the use of technology to advance post-release supervision.

The reason I first got involved in this, as Mr. Cummings knows, is my involvement with treatment and prevention on substance abuse. The more I learned about this issue, as Representative Ruppersberger talked about, the more I saw this direct connection between substance abuse and recidivism.

The numbers are just absolutely staggering. Fifty-seven percent of Federal, 70 percent of State inmates use drugs regularly before prison. The Bureau of Justice Statistics now tells us that they estimate the involvement with drugs or alcohol around the time of the offense is as high as 84 percent. We are just not going to get at this issue, as was talked about earlier, without getting at this issue of substance abuse. The continuum of care that links former prisoners who receive treatment in prison to support in the community, without that continuum of care, recidivism is going to occur. We need to focus on that issue in particular. That is one of our four priorities in this legislation.

There is lots of evidence that in-prison drug treatment programs are effective, both pre-release and post-release. The key, of course, is that this in-prison treatment is far more effective when it is coupled with treatment in the community after the prisoner is released. When there is not this continuum of care, access to AA meetings immediately afterwards, Al-Anon and so on, there is a higher failure rate. That is why re-entry programs are so important.

Research shows, without post-release aftercare, results are almost the same as those inmates who didn't receive treatment in prison at all, which is interesting. So the need for post-release continuity applies to every domain, including drug treatment, employment services, mental health counseling and parent training. It is critical to make sure the right connections are made during the reentry to the community.

There are several successful programs that serve many different populations, from adult men and women to juveniles. For example, NIDA, the National Institute on Drug Abuse study of a California Amity program, the California Amity program has shown a 75 percent return to custody rate after 3 years for offenders with no treatment. That return rate dropped to 27 percent with in-prison treatment and aftercare.

Return rates to prison of those offenders receiving treatment in prison but not receiving aftercare or continuing care were similar to those offenders receiving no treatment at all in prison.

There are lots of other studies I was going to talk about. I am not going to mention them here. I will have them in my written remarks. I hope, Mr. Chairman, the subcommittee will have those as part of their report.

The bottom line is, State after State, in Delaware, 71 percent for new arrests, down to 31 percent. In Ohio, you will hear from Reggie Wilkinson who is going to testify in the next panel, the kind of success we have had there with our Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections. We have some great stories there where, by working with the communities in aftercare, we have been able to see huge success in reducing recidivism.

The key element in these promising programs is this aftercare. Whether it be drug treatment, again, mental health, job training, parenting skills, a combination of these support services, successful completion and reduced recidivism depend largely on the availability of these services during the transition home, during the post-release period.

Of course, the burden on our citizens is also a major issue here. Taxpayers are footing the bill for all of this. The average cost to house a Federal inmate is over $25,000 a year, so there is a big issue here with regard to the taxpayer, and with our deficit, this is an issue that this Congress needs to be focused on. The average cost at the State level is a little less, about $21,170 annually. Of course, these don't include the cost of arrest and prosecution, nor do they take into account the cost to victims.

A modest expenditure to help transition offenders back into the community can save taxpayers thousands of dollars because of all these costs.

There is a study in Washington State, a 2001 study, showing the best re-entry programs can be expected to deliver 20 to 30 percent reductions in recidivism and crime rates. If that is true, we will save billions of dollars, if we can just receive that kind of benefit from this program, a reduction of recidivism of 20 to 30 percent. We think we can do even better, but certainly we can help at the Federal level to make this happen.

Beyond these fiscal issues, one of the most significant costs of prisoner reentry is the impact on children, the weakened ties among family members talked about earlier, the destabilization of our communities. As you all know, the number of kids with a parent in a Federal or State correctional institute has increased over the last decade dramatically. It has increased 100 percent, to about 2 million kids. When expanded to children with parents under some form of correction supervision, it is closer to 10 million children now, we are told.

This is one of my biggest concerns. The children at risk for drug abuse and delinquency need our attention, and they are more at risk when they are in this situation. This bill does provide resources to grandparents and other kinship care and foster care providers who care for children during parental incarceration. It also provides State and local government with resources for family based drug treatment to treat parents and their children as a complete family unit.

Last year, Mr. Chairman, as you know, during the President's State of the Union address, he made a case for the need to address

our reentering population. He put the issue in perspective by saying, "America is the land of the second chance, and when the gates of prison open the path ahead should lead to a better life." That is why we call our bill the Second Chance bill.

During this address, he announced his reentry initiative with a strong focus on job training, transitional housing and prisoner mentoring from faith-based groups. This is an important aspect of our Federal response to reentry. Our bill would authorize a small component of this plan and complements the President's larger reentry initiative.

Together, we think this provides for a comprehensive plan to drastically change how we serve those men and women and how we keep our communities safer. By addressing the most basic needs of ex-offenders coming home, we can reduce the chances of reoffending, and we can improve their success as productive, contributing citizens.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for inviting us to testify before you today, and we look forward to trying to answer any questions you might have.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Hon. Rob Portman follows:]

Statement

of

Representative Rob Portman

Before the

Committee on Government Reform

United States House of Representatives

Oversight Hearing

Concerning
"Confronting Recidivism: Prisoner Re-entry Programs
and a Just Future for All Americans"

February 2, 2005

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I am honored to testify before you today regarding offender reentry and reducing recidivism.

Prisoner reentry is about reducing and preventing crime, as well as restoring lives. **We need to be both tough and smart on crime.** We need to be tough in keeping dangerous felons from returning and committing new crimes, but also smart in making sure that those who are coming home are given the most basic chance to start a new life and turn away from crime.

As you know, the numbers make a clear case for federal and state innovation on this issue. Over two million people are incarcerated in federal or state prisons, and over 97 percent of these prisoners will eventually be released and will return to our communities. Nearly 650,000 people are released from incarceration to communities nationwide each year. These numbers also make it clear that reentry affects each one of us. Reentry success or failure has implications for public safety, the welfare of children, family unification, growing fiscal issues, and community health. By doing a better job on offender reentry, we can prevent crime, help strengthen communities and save the taxpayers money.

Unfortunately, according to recent data from the Department of Justice, two-thirds of those released from prison will be rearrested within three years. The scale of this problem makes a strong case for Congressional action.

First and foremost, offender reentry is about preventing crime and keeping our communities safe. High rates of recidivism translate into thousands of new victims each year. The social and economic costs of a ***67 percent recidivism rate*** nationally are astounding.

Last session I worked very closely on a bill with many colleagues to help our states and communities better address the challenges of prisoner reentry. The Second Chance Act is a bipartisan approach to this problem that would better coordinate federal agencies and policies on prisoner reentry. The bill also increases the support to states and community organizations to address the growing population of ex-offenders returning to communities. The main areas of focus within the bill are 1) jobs, 2) housing, 3) substance abuse and mental health treatment, and

4) support for families. I want to express my sincere thanks to Rep. Souder and Rep. Danny Davis for helping to put this legislation together as original cosponsors and partners. I'd also like to thank Representatives Platts, Cannon, Owens, and Cummings for cosponsoring the Second Chance Act.

The primary goal of the Second Chance Act is public safety. The bill would make funds available to conduct studies to determine who is returning to prison or jail and which of those prisoners present the greatest risk to community safety. We need this data. The bill would also help in the development of procedures to assist relevant authorities in determining when release is appropriate and the use of data to inform the release decision. This would include the use of proven assessment tools to assess the risk factors of returning inmates and the use of technology to advance post-release supervision.

The reason I initially became involved in reentry is because of the connection between drug addiction and our prison population. The numbers are staggering: 57 percent of federal and 70 percent of state inmates used drugs regularly before prison. And the Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates the involvement with drugs/alcohol around the time of the offense as high as 84%. Without a continuum of care that links former prisoners who received treatment in prison to support in the community, recidivism is likely.

There is evidence that in-prison drug treatment programs are effective both pre-release and post-release. The key, of course, is that in-prison treatment is far more effective when coupled with treatment in the community after a prisoner is released. When there is not a continuum of care (access to AA meetings immediately, for example), there are much higher failure rates. That is why reentry programs are so important.

The research shows that without post-release aftercare, results are almost the same as those inmates who did not receive treatment in prison. The need for post-release continuity applies to every domain, including drug treatment, employment services, mental health counseling, or parent training. It is critical to make sure the right connections are made during reentry to the

community. There are several successful programs that serve many different populations from adult men and women to juveniles. For example:

- The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) study of the California Amity Program showed a 75% return to custody rate after three years for offenders with no treatment. The return rate dropped to 27% with in-prison treatment and aftercare. Return rates to prison of those offenders receiving treatment in prison, but not receiving aftercare or continuing care were similar to those offenders receiving no treatment in prison (Institute of Behavioral Research, Texas Christian University, Wexler et al).

- A study of the Delaware Key-Crest Program showed that after three years a released prisoner who received no treatment had a re-arrest rate at 71% for new arrests and a relapse rate at 95 % for drug use, but if an offender received in-prison treatment and completed aftercare then the re-arrest rate decreased to 31% and the drug use relapse rate dropped to 65% (Institute of Behavioral Research, Texas Christian University, Martin et al).

- Two studies of offenders who participated in community-based substance abuse treatment after release from prison found that treatment provided a statistically significant positive benefit in terms of reducing recidivism among subjects in the study compared to the comparison group that received no treatment (Belenko & Peugh 1998; Davidson-Coronado 2001).

- Additionally, programs in prisons and jails appear promising. The Forever Free program, which operates at the California Institution for Women, uses an educational curriculum combined with a strong 12-step emphasis that lasts up to 6 months. Graduates from the program can volunteer to participate in community treatment upon release to parole. A one-year follow-up evaluation of the program of 180 women yielded positive outcomes.

- Other programs nationwide are also promising. The Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS) cooperatively operates with the Ohio Department

of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) four prison-based correctional facilities that are therapeutic communities. ODRC coordinates prison programs with services in the community, which is paramount for successful outcomes.

The key element in these promising programs is aftercare. Whether it be drug treatment, mental health services, job training or parenting skills, or any combination of these support services, successful completion and reduced recidivism depend largely on the availability of these services during the transition home and post-release.

The burden on our citizens and taxpayers is also a serious concern. The average cost to house a federal inmate is over $25,000 a year. The average cost on the state level in 2000 was only slightly less –$21,170 yearly. These figures do not include the cost of arrest and prosecution, nor do they take into account the cost to victims. On the other hand, a modest expenditure to help transition offenders back into the community can save taxpayers thousands of dollars. A prominent 2001 study in Washington State found that, "the best [reentry] programs can be expected to deliver 20% to 30% reductions in recidivism or crime rates" and that "programs that can deliver – at a reasonable program cost – even modest reductions in future criminality can have an attractive economic bottom line."

Beyond fiscal issues, one of the most significant costs of prisoner reentry is the impact on children, the weakened ties among family members and destabilized communities. As you all know, the number of children with a parent in a federal or state correctional facility has increased over the last decade by more than 100% to approximately 2,000,000 children. When expanded to children with parents under some form of corrections supervision, the number is closer to 10 million children. This is one of my biggest concerns. These children are at risk for drug abuse and delinquency and need our attention. The bill would provide resources to grandparents and other kinship care and foster care providers who care for children during parental incarceration. It would also provide state and local governments with resources for family-based drug treatment to treat parents and their children as a complete family unit.

Last year during the President's State of the Union address he made a case for the need to address our reentering population in his state of the union address last year. The President put this issue in perspective, "America is the land of the second chance, and when the gates of the prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life." During his address, he announced his Re-Entry Initiative, with a strong focus on job training, transitional housing, and prisoner mentoring from faith-based groups. This is an important aspect of our federal response to reentry. Our bill would authorize a small component of this plan and complements the President's larger reentry initiative. Together they mean a comprehensive plan to drastically change how we serve these men and women and keep our communities safe.

Our communities and states have begun to address the challenges of prisoner reentry in innovative ways. In recent years, a number of state and local governments have begun to establish improved systems for reintegrating former prisoners. Under such systems, corrections officials begin to plan for a prisoner's release while the prisoner is incarcerated and provide a transition to needed services in the community. Faith leaders and parishioners have a long history of helping ex-offenders transform their lives. Through prison ministries and outreach in communities, churches and faith-based organizations have pioneered reentry services to prisoners, their families and their neighborhoods. Successful reentry protects those who might otherwise be crime victims. It also improves the likelihood that individuals released from prison or juvenile detention facilities can pay fines, fees, restitution, and family support.

By addressing the most basic needs of ex-offenders coming home, we can reduce their chances of re-offending and improve their success as productive, contributing citizens.

I thank you for inviting me here today to testify before the Committee. And I look forward to trying to answer any questions you may have at the appropriate time.

Mr. SOUDER. Before going to Mr. Davis, the best estimate is that at 2 o'clock, in about 6 minutes, we are going to start a series of four votes. What we will do after Mr. Davis' statement is try to get the questions in so we don't have to hold you so we can get to the second panel. We will go a little bit into the first vote.

It is great to have on our subcommittee one of our most active Members and a co-leader of this effort, Congressman Davis. We look forward to hearing your testimony.

STATEMENT OF HON. DANNY DAVIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. Thank you very much.

Let me thank you, first of all, for your leadership and sensitivity that you have displayed not only to this issue but also the sensitivity in rescheduling the hearing so that those Democrats who would have found it difficult to be here and at the retreat can now do both.

I also want to commend the ranking member, Mr. Cummings, for his upstanding leadership not only on this issue but many others, especially those related to crime and justice in our country.

Of course, it is good to be here with Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton and Representative Shays, two of the most outstanding Members, along with Representative Clay.

One of the highlights of being a Member of Congress has actually been working with Representative Portman on this legislation. I want to commend him for his outstanding leadership, for his sensitivity, his understanding and awareness of what I consider to be one of the most difficult challenges and problems facing urban America especially.

All of us are aware of the fact that rehabilitating and reintegrating prisoners back into society continues to loom as one of the great needs of our day. The high rates of incarceration over the last decade have made this need all the more urgent as large numbers of individuals with felony convictions are coming to the end of their sentences.

During his State of the Union address last year, President Bush said, "600,000 inmates will be released from prison back into society this year, and these Americans are in need of help."

We can expect on an annual basis that this large number of released inmates from prison will continue for the next 5 years at least and beyond.

Also, let us be mindful that local jails are releasing 7 million people each year. Many of these individuals, as you have already heard, are never able to find a decent place to live, cannot access various entitlement programs such as public housing, financial assistance for college and, in some instances, food stamps and are oftentimes denied employment because of their past criminal convictions.

Statistics show that nearly 52 percent of all of these individuals will end up back in jail. As these men and women transition from incarceration to freedom, what they need most are comprehensive reentry solutions. With implementation of the Second Chance Act, Community Safety Through Recidivism Prevention, it calls for improving and establishing an effective reentry system to assess and

change those barriers that prevent ex-offenders from making a successful transition from prison to normal community life.

The Second Chance Act contains demonstration projects that will focus on providing ex-offenders with education, job training, substance abuse and after-care treatment and assist ex-offenders with employment and securing housing upon release from prison.

In addition, it will create a Federal interagency task force to identify programs and resources on reentry and ways for improving and changing the barriers that prevent ex-offenders from living a normal, responsible and productive life in society.

Also, the Second Chance Act will establish a resource center for States, local governments, service providers, corrections and community organizations to collect and disseminate best practices and provide training and support around reentry.

The Second Chance Act is a good first step that will provide a directional approach as to what works in trying to increase public safety, reduce the cost of crime and lower the recidivism rate. Prevention, treatment and rehabilitation are just as important as incarceration. These men, women and children still have to live in our communities.

Increasing public safety is a primary concern of our communities and neighborhoods throughout the country. Although we know it is going to be difficult, it can be done. For example, in the State of Illinois last year there were 57 job titles that an ex-offender could not hold by statute. The legislature has removed 18 of those, and now there are 38 occupational categories where you can't work without some form of waiver.

For example, ex-offenders were not allowed to be a barber, to cut hair, a nail technician, cosmetologist, cannot be a custodian in a hospital or cut the grass around a medical center or watch dishes at a nursing home.

Many of these ex-offenders were convicted of nonviolent offenses, mainly drug offenses, so it is extremely difficult for ex-offenders to find housing and get a job after they have paid their debt to society. We must ensure that everyone has the opportunity to be productive citizens in this country.

Everyone deserves a second chance. The bill before us now by my colleague Rob Portman and I will start the process when it becomes law to give ex-offenders hope to transition themselves back into community life.

Finally, in my district I work a great deal with people in the community. I have 31 task groups and work groups. And one of those is an ex-offenders task force which represents a broad group of members from national, local civil rights organizations, ex-offenders themselves, law enforcement officials, elected officials, community actions, faith-based organizations, block clubs, businesses.

The task force convened several focus meetings to explore the problems and make recommendations, and in every instance one of the basic needs that ex-offenders indicated that they had was the need to find a place to stay, the need to have a house, the need to have a place that they could go to once they are released from prison.

Therefore, as a result of that, we introduced H.R. 2166, the Public Safety Ex-offender Self-sufficiency Act, which is designed to pro-

vide structured living arrangements for ex-offenders by building 100,000 units of SRO-type housing throughout the country, using a system of tax credits we call an ex-offender tax credit, where States would receive credits on the basis of the number of ex-offenders living in the State.

Finally, I agree with Representative Portman. There is no way that you can seriously have a reentry program that works without substance abuse treatment. The correlation between drug use and crime commission is so high until, in many instances, they are almost one and the same. So if we are going to seriously rehabilitate ex-offenders and help them find their way back, then we must provide resources for treatment. We call it treatment on demand, where when a person decides that they are ready for drug treatment they ought to be able to receive it.

So I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify. We put that initiative on the ballot in Cook County in the last election. A group of community residents, ex-offenders themselves, and 1.2 million people in Cook County voted to say yes we want to put some more money into substance abuse treatment, because we know it is a good investment.

I thank you very much and appreciate being here.

Mr. SOUDER. Let me start with a basic question here. I know this was heavily debated when you drafted the bill, and a forum like this is both to identify the problem and say, look, we have a problem in this country. This hearing will hopefully help make us aware of it, but then also look at the particular legislation and say how are you addressing this. First off, we understand; but I am not sure everybody who may be here or watching—and this is an authorizing bill, not an appropriations bill, so the money isn't real money, it is guideline money.

Now, even with it in that context, the bill is $112 million. We have multiple different subsections, and this leads to two different types of things that we are going to have to deal with as we look at legislation like this: Can you really make a difference with $112 million, and how do you see that leveraged. And, second, given the budget pressures that we have, do you think we can get $112 million through an authorization? It's a challenge from both ends, and I know it's what you have been struggling with.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. I don't know about giving him the money that I do.

Mr. PORTMAN. And you say that I am responsible for getting the money.

You have put your finger on it, Mr. Chairman. We initially actually chose $100 million, and then we just liked that mentoring program so much we couldn't find a way to cut it back, so we are figuring $112 million this year. The reason we tried to keep it at that level was because of the physical situation we find ourselves in this country. We are cognizant of the fact that it is going to be tough to get an authorization bill done at much over 100. It has to do with how we work our process in Congress and the Suspension Calendar and so on.

But having said that, we also, you know, have been very careful to keep within that bill, within that $112 million, which is substantial resources, some real leverage points for State and local govern-

ments to be able to take what we are giving them and leverage it into something more.

The provision of the data I talked about earlier, just providing data so that communities know where to better target their resources; no one else is doing that. The Federal Government really needs to provide that.

Danny talked about some other issues that we think will encourage innovation at the State and local level by having a little Federal seed money. We will get them to do some things that are innovative and we will help the whole country, because by funding something that works, then we can spread that information, disseminate it, and we do, you know, we do have a clearing house of information to go out around the country, of best practices, what does work and doesn't work, you know.

Mr. Ruppersberger talked about a couple of programs that he thought worked very well in his county in Maryland. We ought to have a hearing about that nationally and get that information out. So it is not all the money that, again, some folks would like to hear, and maybe you will hear that in your testimony.

On the other hand, given the budget realities, we think that, you know, it's adequate to make a big difference, and we think it's doable in the context of our budget deficit. The return on investment is incredible, too, as we talked about earlier. If we can get this done, it will result in a tremendous return on the investment to the taxpayer.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. And I think that's really the key. It's a minor investment in reality because the returns are so great. I mean, just imagine, if you can redirect 100 ex-offenders, some of whom might have committed a crime that could have cost millions of dollars. I mean, one hit on the head, when a person is trying to get a $10 fix on a nickel bag, can put a person in the hospital that will run up a hospital bill for maybe a half million dollars that would have been saved, because had the individual not been in their state of need, then this crime perhaps never would have occurred. And so in addition to the return relative to the savings, also the return in terms of the prevention of a crime and the prevention of a trauma and a tragic situation that develops for someone else.

So I think as tough as it is, I think the American people would appreciate that kind of expenditure because it's a great investment.

Mr. PORTMAN. Can I give you a back-of-the-envelope estimate—not to spend too much on this question—but let's assume that of the 650,000 State and Federal prisoners getting released every year, about half go back to prison within 3 years. We have talked about two-thirds. Well let's be conservative. That translates into about 240,000 ex-offenders going in at about $25,000 a year at Federal level. Let's assume we can reduce recidivism by about 20 percent, being conservative. We believe there are incentives in here to be able to achieve that over time. That is $6 billion in State and Federal prison costs.

And so we think although this is a substantial amount of money, it is money that will be well invested and the return to the taxpayer will far exceed.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Cummings.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I just have one question, since we are limited on time.

One of the things that, you know, as you all were talking, I was thinking—we had some witnesses come here on another issue, and they were talking about effective integration of services and not reinventing the wheel, not necessarily on this issue, but I was just wondering, in negotiation a lot of times we come in with programs, and there are already mechanisms.

For example, in the city of Baltimore, we have job-finding agencies. And sometimes folks are so busy trying to reinvent the wheel that they go past these various entities instead of trying to, you know, bring them all together.

I guess the thing I am concerned about is what the chairman was just referring to. If I could spend, you know—if I had an unlimited budget, I would like to have one for this because it is just that important. But I am just being realistic, looking at our fiscal restraints in this time that we are in.

I was just wondering whether you all had—is the program aimed also at pulling in agencies, State and Federal, even private, that might already have these things that are important, and them being a part of the process, as opposed to trying to reinvent the wheel, you come up with a nice new wheel, but the effectiveness, because you have to spread the money so far, is not as great as it could be when those pieces are already out there.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. Well, I think it speaks to the issue of coordination, and I would agree with you that there are many disparate programs that exist. But I think this helps to bring those programs and centralize them so that everybody, and if not everybody, many people now know what is, in fact, available.

But I think the other thing that it does, as we continue the discussion, the big problem is you can have a program to find jobs, but if companies won't hire anybody, you just got a program.

And my point is that it helps raise the level of awareness to the extent that potential employers begin to understand that it is also in their best interest to find ways to help put some of these individuals to work.

Mr. CUMMINGS. One of the things I had established long before I came to Congress, a volunteer program to help inmates coming out of our boot camp. We found that they were very—the boot camp seemed to be very effective. But once they got out of the boot camp, they went back, as I think Congresswoman Norton was saying, to the same neighborhood, hanging with the same people, doing the same thing. So they went back.

One of the things that we discovered, though, was that if we could redirect, you know, the people that they hung with and the things that they did, and could find them jobs—and we also had some volunteers that come in and do counseling, basically the kinds of things you are talking about—it could be very effective. But it was very effective. I was so glad to hear you talk about jobs, both of you, because without a job you go right back to the same old things.

On that note, Congressman Davis, one of the things that happened is that as people began—companies began to hire people from our little program, they did—the guys went out and ladies

went out there and did just such a great job, they started asking us for the folks that were in the program, because, you know—so one thing led to another. So there is a rainbow out here, we just have to make sure we can reach it.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. Especially if we train them well.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Right.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. Work ethic. All of the things that go with it. It is kind of a two-way street. You have to meet the individual halfway if the individual is ready to do that. That's what we have to attempt to do.

Mr. SOUDER. We only have 5 minutes left in the vote. I am going to dismiss the first panel.

On the second panel, will anybody who is back start with the questioning. Thank you very much for your participation.

This committee stands in recess.

[Recess.]

Mr. SOUDER. The committee will come back to order.

As you heard me refer to in the first panel, as an oversight committee it's our standard practice to ask all of our witnesses to testify under oath. So will you each stand, raise your right hands.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. SOUDER. Let the record show that all the witnesses have answered in the affirmative. My understanding is that Dr. Wilkinson, Reginald Wilkinson of Ohio has a 3:30 flight. And so are you still going to try to make that? But we are going to put you—we are going to put you——

Mr. WILKINSON. I would still rather go first.

Mr. SOUDER. If you need to go first I understand that. This vote, four votes, took a long time.

Thank you very much. Dr. Wilkinson.

STATEMENTS OF REGINALD A. WILKINSON, Ed.D., OHIO REHABILITATION AND CORRECTIONS AGENCY; LORNA HOGAN, MOTHER ADVOCATE, THE REBECCA PROJECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, WASHINGTON, DC; FELIX MATA, BALTIMORE CITY'S EX-OFFENDER INITIATIVE, MAYOR'S OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT; PAUL A. QUANDER, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURT SERVICES AND OFFENDER SUPERVISION AGENCY; AND JIM McNEIL AND DAVID RUSSELL, MENTOR AND PROTEGE IN THE INNERCHANGE FREEDOM INITIATE

STATEMENT OF REGINALD A. WILKINSON

Mr. WILKINSON. Thank you.

Chairman Souder, members of the subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony at this oversight hearing. I am now in my 32nd year as a correctional administrator and my 14th as director. A more detailed account of my experience is included in my written testimony for your review.

I would like to provide the committee with a general overview of the importance of prisoner reentry to the field of corrections. The field of corrections has embarked upon a major reexamination of offender reentry. In a short span of time, an impressive array of efforts has been launched at all levels of government to build more effective and innovative responses to the notion of offender reentry.

For instance, the Urban Institute has hosted a series of reentry round tables to assess the state of knowledge and to publish specialized reports on this topic.

The National Institute of Corrections in 2000 hosted two national public hearings on a variety of correctional topics. One such topic was offender reentry. As a result, the Transitions from Prison to Community Project was launched.

The U.S. Department of Justice and other Federal agencies forged a unique partnership by providing a total $100 million in grant funding to all 50 States to address reentry for violent offenders. This project is known as the Serious and Violent Reentry Offender Initiative.

As this committee is well aware, and as you have heard from the previous witnesses, President George W. Bush in his 2004 State of the Union address urged Congress to support the reentry transition of offenders.

The President's statement that America is the land of second chances will resonate with corrections professionals for many years to come. We are pleased that Cleveland, OH hosted the first Annual National Conference on Offender Reentry, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice. The Council of State Governments Reentry Policy Council has recently released a landmark report that offers a comprehensive set of bipartisan consensus-based recommendations for policymakers and practitioners interested in improving the likelihood that adults released from prison or jail will avoid crime and become productive and healthy members of families in our communities.

The report of the reentry Policy Council reflects a broad consensus achieved among diverse experts in these areas. The Second Chance Act is consistent with those recommendations enunciated in the council report, in that it recognizes the many complex issues affecting individuals released from prison or jail which must be addressed to reduce recidivism.

I have wrestled with the issue of reentry for much of my professional life, and I have seen how our approach to reentry can and should be reinvented to improve the safety and stability of America's families and communities.

I would like to recognize the unprecedented leadership of Ohio Congressman Rob Portman and Congressman Danny Davis and other cosponsors of this vital legislation. This bill, when adopted, will exert a substantial impact on reducing offender recidivism, save precious taxpayer dollars, and provide tools to address the myriad substance abuse, mental health, and other problems. It will further strengthen families in communities across the country. It is a bill that speaks to sound public policy and effective correctional practice.

It is notable that approximately 650,000 persons, as you heard earlier today, will be released annually from State and Federal prisons to communities across this Nation.

Criminologist Dr. Joan Petersilia explained that the problem of offender reentry remains quite serious. Her dismal conclusion is that from available evidence, persons being released from prison today are doing less well than their counterparts released a decade

ago. The cost of criminal behavior, recidivism, are enormous. A total of $60 billion was spent on corrections alone in 2002.

In many States, innovative reentry initiatives are under way. A key is that these strategies and initiatives must be developed in collaboration with community groups, service providers, citizens, victims, as well as formerly incarcerated persons.

In July 2002 the Department of Corrections in Ohio published a comprehensive report entitled "The Ohio Plan for Productive Offender reentry and Recidivism Reduction." The Ohio plan views reentry as a philosophy, not as a program. The plan calls for broad systems approach to managing offenders returning to the community.

Under the Ohio plan, the process of planning for reentry begins immediately upon incarceration, not a few weeks, not a few months before release from imprisonment. This effort represents a holistic and seamless approach to transition from the prison community. Ensuring that offenders receive appropriate programming during confinement and while they are under supervision in the community is an important component of the reentry transition.

During the last decade, the total numbers of parents in prison has increased sharply, from an estimated 452,000 in 1991 to 721,000 in 1997, an increase of 60 percent. These prisoners are parents to millions of children, again as you heard earlier today.

Policymakers need to pay more attention to how the experience of incarceration and reentry affect families and children.

The Second Chance Act recognizes the importance of family involvement and reentry. The Ohio Department of Corrections has taken steps to engage offenders and family in reentry. In March 2004 the Department hosted a conference focusing on prisoners as parents and the changes associated with reentry.

Following the conference, I formed the Family Council, composed of appropriate stakeholders. The Second Chance Act recognizes the vital role that community-based organization and local community members should play in returning offenders home crime-free and drug-free. Communities and local citizens bring expertise, knowledge of resources, and often a willingness to assist offenders in making a successful transition back home.

Three Ohio cities have recently been involved in a program called REIL, Reentry of Individuals and Enriching Lives. These events have all been well received. Mayor Jane Campbell in Cleveland probably has the most aggressive local government reentry initiative in our State.

Finally, under the Ohio plan we have taken steps to engage the faith community through the formation of a faith-based council. Offenders released from prison experience a range of barriers affecting their prospects for a successful return home. Numerous laws have been passed restricting the kinds of jobs for which prisoners can be hired. Again, you have heard some testimony about this earlier.

Jeremy Travis, president of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, called these "invisible punishments" by which he means the extension of formal criminal sanctions through the diminution of rights and responsibilities of citizenship. They may

carry serious, adverse, and even unfair consequences for the individuals affected.

Some offenders have the opportunity to live for a short time in a halfway house or similar transitional housing. The problem for many leaving prison or temporary housing continues because there are collateral sanctions that prevent access to public housing in many jurisdictions. Access to permanent and affordable housing for the released offender needs to be addressed.

I am optimistic about the future of reentry. The commitment in the field of corrections remains strong and is growing. Several States, including Ohio, Michigan, and others have formed the equivalent of an interagency reentry steering committee to guide their work. In my State, I chair the newly formed State Agency Offender Reentry Agency Coalition.

I also want to acknowledge the formation of the International Association of Reentry. Its mission is to foster victim and community safety through correctional reform and prison population management, cost containment, professional development, and the successful reintegration of offenders. The association is hosting its Inaugural Summit in Columbus, OH in March 2005.

There is a pressing need for information to be shared and disseminated regarding where reentry best practices may be found. I strongly support the Second Chance Act's provision calling for a national offender reentry resource center. The Second Chance Act provides a sensible balance that recognizes reentry is about public safety. At the same time, it is about returning offenders home as taxpaying and productive citizens. I appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wilkinson follows:]

Written Testimony to:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

House of Representatives

Committee on Government Reform

Oversight Hearing

"Confronting Recidivism: Prisoner Re-entry Programs and a Just Future for All Americans"

Reginald A. Wilkinson, Ed.D.

Director, State of Ohio, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

President and Executive Director, International Association of Reentry

Advisory Board Chair, U.S. Department of Justice,
National Institute of Corrections

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Chairman Davis and members of the House Committee on Government Reform, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony at this oversight hearing entitled "Confronting Recidivism: Prisoner Re-entry Programs and a Just Future for All Americans." Certainly the topic of this hearing is one of the most important justice initiatives that exists today. My comments detail why I've attached a high level of importance to the concept of offender reentry.

I am now in my 32nd year as a correctional administrator—all in Ohio. I have served as Director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction for fourteen years. I am a past president of both the American Correctional Association and the Association of State Correctional Administrators: two of the nation's leading corrections trade associations. I was appointed a member of the U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections Advisory Board by former U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft; its members elected me chair of the Board. Ohio Governor Bob Taft asked me to serve as chair of the State Agency Offender Reentry Coalition. Moreover, I serve as president and executive director of the newly formed International Association of Reentry. Also noteworthy, I have served as an advisor to organizations such as the Council of State Governments and the Urban Institute regarding their offender reentry initiatives.

I would like to provide the Committee with a general overview of the importance of prisoner reentry to the field of corrections before I share more specific comments about the value of the legislation you are considering.

REENTRY NATIONALLY

As it moves through the first decade of the twenty-first century, the field of corrections has embarked upon a major reexamination of offender reentry. In fact, offender "reentry" is beginning to take the corrections world by storm. In my estimation, it is a storm much overdue.

There is a growing national movement in corrections embracing offender reentry. Remarkably, in a relatively short span of time, an impressive array of efforts have been launched at all levels of government and by untold groups and community organizations to build more effective and innovative responses to the myriad of challenges presented by reentry. These efforts, which I will summarize at various points throughout my remarks, demonstrate clearly that reentry is not a fad. It is here to stay!

Since the late 1990s, the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., has hosted a series of Reentry Roundtables to assess the state of knowledge and to publish specialized reports on this topic. Leaders in the field, academicians,

policymakers, and many others have gathered periodically to debate and share what is known about the challenges and issues that must be addressed to ensure successful reentry transitions for offenders.

The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in 2000 hosted two national "public hearings" on a variety of correctional topics; one such topic was offender reentry. As a result, NIC has launched a significant "Transition from Prison to Community" project to offer technical assistance and support to a select number of states relative to transforming their systems governing reentry. NIC, a division of the U.S. Department of Justice, is well regarded within the field of corrections. It has always been, and continues to be supportive of decision-making informed by credible evidence and sound practice.

In 2001, the U.S. Department of Justice and a broad consortium of federal agencies forged a unique, path breaking partnership by providing a total of $100 million in grant funding spread across all fifty states to address reentry planning and programming for serious, violent, felony offenders. Known as the "Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative," its continuing importance to the field has been reinforced by additional funding for a comprehensive, multi-year, multi-site evaluation of selected states' systems of reentry. Ohio was one of the recipients of this grant.

As this Committee is well aware, President George W. Bush in his 2004 State of the Union address urged Congress to allocate $300 million over four years to support the reentry transition of offenders. His reentry initiative calls for support for job training and placement services, transitional housing, community and faith-based services, especially in mentoring offenders as they return home. President Bush's recitation that "America is the land of second chances" will resonate with corrections professionals for years to come.

In mid-September 2004, Cleveland, Ohio was the site of the first annual "National Conference on Offender Reentry" sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice and the other federal agencies involved in the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative. Then Attorney General Ashcroft gave an opening keynote address. Over 1,400 attendees participated in the conference.

The Re-Entry Policy Council recently released a landmark report that offers a comprehensive set of bipartisan, consensus-based recommendations for policymakers and practitioners interested in improving the likelihood that adults released from prison or jail will avoid crime and become productive and healthy members of both their families and community. To coordinate the Policy Council, the Council of State Governments partnered with ten other national organizations including the Association of State Correctional Administrators.

This unprecedented project brought together nearly one hundred leaders representing a wide spectrum of systems relating to prisoner reentry and

received the support of three federal agencies: the Departments of Justice, Labor, and Health and Human Services. The report comprises hundreds of recommendations and research findings related to employment, public safety, housing, health, families, faith-based initiatives, and victims.

Of even greater importance, the *Report of the Re-Entry Policy Council* reflects a broad consensus achieved among diverse experts in these areas, Republicans and Democrats alike. As such, it can serve as a template for the kind of bipartisan collaboration needed to support—and pass—the proposed legislation.

The Second Chance Act is consistent with the recommendations enunciated in the *Report of the Re-Entry Policy Council* in that it recognizes the many complex issues affecting individuals released from prison or jail, which must be addressed to ensure that they do not recidivate upon their return to the community. Like the *Report*, the proposed legislation also encourages state and local governments to craft solutions which span agencies and engage community-based partners.

As a state and national corrections leader and member of the Council, I have wrestled with the issue of reentry for much of my professional life, and I have seen how our approach to reentry can and should be reinvented to improve the safety and stability of America's families and communities. I applaud the federal leadership and vital support that the Second Chance Act provides to local jurisdictions struggling with this pressing public safety and public spending issue.

COMMENTS ON THE "SECOND CHANCE ACT"

I would now like to share some observations regarding the Second Chance Act. To start, I would like to recognize the unprecedented leadership of Ohio Congressman Rob Portman, and the other co-sponsors of this vital legislation. This bill, when adopted, will exert a substantial impact on reducing offender recidivism, save precious taxpayer dollars, provide tools to address the myriad of substance abuse, mental health and other problems that beset offenders who are confined behind prison walls, and serve to strengthen families and communities across the country. The comprehensive nature of this proposed legislation is designed to ensure a seamless transition for offenders characterized by both support and accountability. It is a bill that speaks to sound public policy and effective correctional practice.

I will now address the bill, specifically, in relation to offender recidivism and public safety, viewing reentry from a holistic framework, strengthening families, improving communities' quality of life, and reducing barriers that confront offenders as they seek to return home following a period of confinement. I will close with some comments about the future of reentry.

Offender Recidivism and Public Safety

It is notable that approximately 650,000 offenders will be released annually from state and federal prisons to communities and neighborhoods across the land. What this means is that over the course of the next decade, a total of six to seven million formerly incarcerated persons will return home from confinement. The interest in reentry is fueled by many factors including the recognition by legislators, correctional leaders, and others that public safety is sorely compromised when hundreds of thousands of prisoners released from institutions are ill-prepared and ill-equipped to succeed in the free world. The Second Chance Act recognizes how reentry is approached, the strategies, initiatives, and programs that are adopted by those in the field matter a great deal to the future well-being of communities, victims, and offenders.

From research and common sense, we know that a majority of offenders released from confinement are all too likely to reoffend. As Dr. Joan Petersilia, a well-known California criminologist states, the problem of offender recidivism remains quite serious. She has compared the results of a recent survey by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) on a cohort of prisoners released in 1994 with a similar BJS study completed on prisoners released in 1983. Her dismal conclusion is that "from the available evidence...persons being released from prison today are doing less well than their counterparts released a decade ago in successfully reintegrating into their communities. More of them are being rearrested; these arrests are occurring more quickly; and as a group, ex-convicts are accounting for a growing share of all serious crimes experienced in the United States." High rates of recidivism mean pronounced levels of victimization.

The costs of criminal behavior and recidivism are enormous. High rates of offender recidivism are one factor driving prison population growth across the country. A total of $60 billion was spent on corrections alone in 2002, a figure that shows no sign of decreasing. The national average annual cost of confining a prisoner exceeds $22,000. And these figures do not account for other criminal justice processing costs, or the costs—personal and property related—to the victims of crime. These are costs that cannot be sustained in the absence of any meaningful return on the investment.

My experience over thirty-two years in corrections suggests unequivocally that the issue of offender recidivism must be addressed from within a fundamentally different framework. Whether the reincarceration is because of a new crime committed or a technical violation, we must begin by recognizing that corrections leaders and correctional systems cannot go it alone. To do so promises to repeat the failures of the past, and guarantees continued high rates of offender recidivism.

Viewing Reentry Holistically

The Second Chance Act clearly acknowledges the importance of taking a holistic approach when dealing with offenders returning home. In Ohio, Washington, and in many other states, innovative initiatives are underway that emphasize building a continuum of services, programming, support, and offender accountability that extends from the time of sentencing well beyond release from prison to any period of supervision that may follow. The key is that these strategies and initiatives must be developed in collaboration and partnership with community groups and organizations, service providers, citizens, victims, and formerly incarcerated individuals. Their ownership and support at the local level are vital to achieving successful pathways for offender reentry.

In July 2002, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction published a comprehensive report called *The Ohio Plan for Productive Offender Reentry and Recidivism Reduction*. The "Ohio Plan" views reentry as a philosophy, not a program. The plan calls for a broad systems approach to managing offenders returning to the community following a period of incarceration. It contains wide-ranging recommendations centering on reentry planning, programming, family involvement, employment and discharge readiness, offender supervision, and community partnerships.

Under the "Ohio Plan," the process of planning for reentry begins immediately through a series of assessments at one of three reception centers, not a few weeks, or even a few months, before release from incarceration. This effort represents an ambitious and holistic endeavor to create a seamless transition from prison to the community. Reentry planning is an essential component that must begin immediately upon an offender's admission. It draws on a variety of risk and needs assessment tools for prioritizing programming and service delivery as offenders transition through the system. The Second Chance Act recognizes the importance of such assessments to reducing the likelihood of offender recidivism through its provision for grants to state and local governments to draw on such tools.

Ensuring that offenders receive appropriate programming both during confinement and while they are under supervision in the community is an important component of the reentry transition. National statistics, as well as Ohio data, indicate that a significant percentage of offenders who enter state and federal prison have previous histories of substance abuse, and/or mental health problems. These offenders require effective intervention and service delivery in a manner that must be sustained both during and after incarceration. The provision in the bill offering demonstration grants supportive of such programming will assist many states in addressing these offenders' unique needs. It is critical, however, that the treatment interventions provided draw from

those program models that have demonstrated their effectiveness and value as evidenced by credible evaluations.

Strengthening Families

One of the more significant costs associated with imprisonment is its impact on the families and children left behind. As research shows, a growing number of prison inmates are parents. During the last decade the total number of parents in prison has increased sharply—from an estimated 452,500 in state and federal facilities in 1991 to 721,500 in 1997—an increase of sixty percent. These prisoners are parents to 1.5 million children. This figure represents a growth of over one-half million children in the last decade.

More children are affected by the incarceration of a parent than at any other time in the history of corrections in the United States. In fact, two percent of all minor children and roughly seven percent of all African-American children had a parent in state or federal prison in 1997.

Yet, one of the more sobering trends too often overlooked in correctional management discussions is the impact incarceration *and* reentry have on families, fathers, mothers, children, siblings, and others who are connected to a family network. Policymakers and others have not paid enough attention to how the experience of incarceration and reentry affects families and children. Nor have they paid sufficient attention to how engaging families and prisoners during and after confinement may contribute to more successful reentry outcomes.

The Second Chance Act recognizes the importance of family involvement in reentry. I strongly support its commitment to provide grant funding to states and local jurisdictions to expand family-based treatment centers that target comprehensive treatment services for the family as a unit. Family case management that starts inside and continues into the community following an offender's release will contribute to successful reentry transitions. I also support the bill's provision that calls for removing the age limitation for grandparents to receive support and services under those circumstances in which they have assumed custody and care for their grandchildren while one or both parents are incarcerated.

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction has taken steps to engage offenders' families in reentry. In March 2004, the Department, in partnership with the Center for Families and Children, a non-profit community agency in Cleveland, Ohio co-hosted a conference focusing on prisoners as parents and the challenges of reentry. The conference was very well received.

As part of the conference agenda, I formed a Family Council composed of various state agency representatives, family members, non-profit and inter-faith agencies, and family counseling practitioners to address offender/family issues

across the reentry continuum. As it grows and develops, it will provide specific recommendations and ideas for strengthening the role families play in supporting offenders' reentry transitions both while they are confined in institutions, and while they are under supervision in the community.

The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction recently received a commitment of $3 million from the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) grant administered by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to pilot "Family Life Centers" inside three prisons. The pilot project, *Children of Incarcerated Parents: Breaking the Cycle*, has established three such centers at the Dayton, London, and Richland Correctional Institutions to provide parenting and family services to offenders before and after release from prison. This initiative builds on Ohio's commitment to reentry by encouraging family members to participate in prison-based programming, while accessing additional resources and wrap-around services in partnership with three community agencies: Talbert House (Hamilton County), the Center for Families and Children (Cuyahoga County), and Alvis House (Franklin County).

Improving Communities' Quality of Life

The Second Chance Act recognizes the vital role that community-based organizations and local community members should play in returning offenders to their home and communities so that they can be productive and remain crime free. Communities and local citizens bring expertise, knowledge of resources, and often a willingness to assist offenders in making a successful reentry transition. Mentoring represents a particularly important component in this process. Mentors whether through faith-based, or other community organizations offer guidance, direction, and often a compassionate commitment to work with ex-offenders as they reacquire the skills and competencies they need to make it once they are released.

The Department of Corrections under the Ohio Plan on Reentry has created a "reentry mentor" as part of our Volunteers Program. The goal is to afford community and faith-based organizations the opportunity to work with offenders starting inside and carrying that relationship outside to the community. This strategy holds great promise for returning offenders safely home. I believe this is an area of corrections that will be greatly enhanced given the bill's authorization to provide grants to those community organizations and groups that provide transitional services and mentoring programs as offenders exit the prison system.

Community ownership and involvement is important in other ways as well. One of the more important initiatives with the Department involves the establishment of Citizen Circles. Citizen Circles draw on community partnerships and active collaboration with Ohio's Adult Parole Authority, institutions, service providers, law enforcement, family members, and community members. The focus of the Citizen Circle is to provide offenders returning to the community with transitional

support, yet hold them accountable for compliance with their reentry plan. I have also formed a Citizen Circle Steering Committee to guide the future work and effectiveness of this vital, community-based effort.

Three reentry forums have been held recently in the Ohio cities of Toledo, Lima, and Defiance. Called a "RIEL" Partnership: Reentry of Individuals & Enriching Lives, these events have been very well attended. They are designed to provide an interactive forum to educate, create awareness, and facilitate networking of agencies, community groups, and many others at the local level supportive of offenders returning to their local neighborhoods and areas of residence.

The City of Cleveland has established a Reentry Advisory Committee. Formed under the auspices of Mayor Jane Campbell's office, the goal of this initiative is to develop a strategic plan that will provide a blueprint for linking resources, identifying effective programming, and enhancing service delivery for ex-offenders returning to the city. The committee is expected to develop a city-wide reentry strategy by the middle of 2005.

Finally, under the Ohio Plan on Reentry, the Ohio Department of Corrections has taken steps to engage the faith community through the formation of a Faith-Based Council, and regionalized efforts to draw in faith-based participation in reentry programming and transitional services. As part of this, regional faith councils have been established in several areas of the state that are linked with the institutions and parole offices in the respective regions. Through their activities, members of the faith community are invited to provide mentoring and support services for families and offenders. These efforts are pursued in partnership with Ohio Governor Bob Taft's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

Collateral Sanctions and Barriers to Reentry

Offenders released from prison experience a range of barriers affecting their prospects for a successful return home. Since 1980, numerous laws have been passed restricting the kinds of jobs for which ex-prisoners can be hired, easing the requirements for their parental rights to be terminated, restricting their access to public welfare and housing subsidies, and limiting their right to vote. Though the rationale for these changes may have been well intentioned, their impact has been cumulative and deleterious to offender reentry.

Jeremy Travis, president of John Jay College of Criminal Justice, called these "invisible punishments" by which he means the extension of formal criminal sanctions through the diminution of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and legal residency in the United States. Referred to by others as collateral sanctions, they represent laws, regulations, and administrative rules that often operate largely out of public view. They may carry serious, adverse, and unfair consequences for the individuals affected.

Recently, a symposium was held at the Toledo University Law School. The symposium brought together lawyers, correctional administrators, judges, college professors, and others to assess the impact of the collateral sanctions attached to a criminal conviction in Ohio's laws and administrative rules. One of the documents presented showed that there were 359 such sanctions, many of them serving to restrict access to employment in various professions and occupations. I heartily applaud the focus of the Second Chance Act on addressing those federal barriers, or collateral sanctions, that may undermine offenders' efforts at reentry through the formation of a federal taskforce. With support from our Governor's office, I am preparing omnibus reentry legislation that will address such barriers in Ohio, alongside provisions that facilitate the successful return of offenders following their release from prison, or discharge from parole supervision.

LOOKING AHEAD: THE FUTURE OF REENTRY

I am optimistic about the future of reentry. The scale and scope of the national focus on reentry is unique to the extent that it encompasses a holistic perspective. Among my peers, it is not possible to go to a meeting without engaging in a dialogue about the momentum and phenomenon of reentry. In 2002, I convened directors of state departments of corrections who met at the annual Congress of Correction of the American Correctional Association to discuss their respective states' strategies for retooling their systems of reentry. As then president-elect of the Association of State Correctional Administrators, and the host sponsor, I found it quite significant that over forty directors/commissioners were in attendance to discuss their approaches to retooling reentry in their respective states.

The commitment to reentry in the field of corrections remains strong, and is growing. Several states, including Michigan and Ohio, have formed the equivalent of an interagency reentry steering committees to guide their work. Under Governor Taft's approval, I am chairing the newly formed State Agency Offender Reentry Coalition. This group is composed of over a dozen cabinet level agencies and offices whose work directly or indirectly impacts on reentry. Its mission is to provide assistance and support in the many areas of state and local government linked to offender reentry transitions.

Most recently, I have worked with a group of colleagues from across the country to form the International Association of Reentry. Its mission is to foster victim and community safety through correctional reform and prison population management, cost containment, professional development, and the successful reintegration of offenders. The Association will serve as a catalyst spurring active collaboration among correctional practitioners, allied justice professionals, the victim community, formerly incarcerated persons, higher education, public policymakers, inter-faith and family advocates, and community members.

The Association is committed to identifying, developing, and disseminating evidence-based "best practices" and those policies, programs, and protocols relevant to reentry. The Association is hosting its Inaugural Summit in Columbus, Ohio from March 14-16, 2005. This and future Summits will provide energetic advocacy targeting the many areas encompassed by reentry, including the issuing of action-oriented reports, position papers, legislative testimony, and other methods. Initially, the reach of the Association is within North America. Eventually, the Association expects a worldwide membership.

There is a pressing need for information to be shared and disseminated regarding where best practices may be found. There is also a real need to ensure that there are sufficient resources and mechanisms in place to provide staff training on what these best practices are and how they may be implemented. I strongly support the Second Chance Act's provision calling for a National Offender Reentry Resource Center. I believe that the existence of such a center will provide a clearinghouse and national database whereby all levels of government, local jurisdictions and communities, and stakeholders who have an interest may go to learn more about what works and what is effective relative to offender reentry.

The Second Chance Act provides a very sensible balance that recognizes reentry is about public safety, at the same time, it is about returning offenders home as tax-paying and productive citizens. As I think about the past, and our prospects for the future, it is very evident to me that we do not have a whole lot of viable options—other than to embrace reentry. Reentry must be done correctly. That means drawing on reentry best practices, seeking active collaboration and sustainable community and faith-based partners, engaging families across the full spectrum of reentry, and reducing those barriers that undermine offenders' successful transitions from prison to home. It is my firm belief that if we accomplish those goals, when coupled with the very vital support provided by the Second Chance Act, we will experience outcomes that create safer communities.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony at this oversight hearing. Mr. Chairman, I'd be pleased to respond to any questions that you or committee members may have.

Mr. SOUDER. We have been joined by our colleague from California, Congressman Diane Watson, and she has a statement she would like to make.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing addressing issues that are very tragic not only to our Nation as a whole, but specifically disastrous and devastating to the African American community. At issue is the dubious trend amongst African American males in the United States, criminal justice system, to enter this system and be released with nowhere to turn for support.

The tragic state of African American males and minority males in general is, in fact, perpetuated by a lack of funding and attention to our educational system and post-release programs for those that have been incarcerated. The goal is not to coddle criminals but to foster productive contributions to society.

Our schools and our students are at war with themselves, while our communities constantly get the negative ripple effect of more people being in jail than in college. Researchers constantly wonder why violence in American society has reached pandemic levels. The answer is simple. We have forgotten about those who will 1 day be released from prison and will be in the same society we function in every day.

Our most urgent need is a national resolve to confront and deal with the problems leading to violence before, during, and after incarceration. The key to preventing our stemming recidivism is to understand where and when it occurs, what causes it, and which strategies for prevention and intervention are most effective.

All too often we fail to effectively listen to those people who are directly impacted by the justice system.

Mr. Chairman, I can speak firsthand on the plague of crime caused in my congressional district and throughout the Nation. Support, legislatively and financially, should be given to pilot efforts that will help increase education and decrease recidivism.

A man or woman when released from prison must have direction and opportunity because they will be part of the communities where most of us live. We must put greater focus on this issue and remember that we must leave no one behind or our Nation will fall.

And I just want to add this piece. We have been doing a series of youth violence hearings in my district, because the last police officer in Los Angeles who was killed was killed by a young man coming out of prison and in a domestic violence situation. And the whole community turned out mourning for the death of this officer. So it comes home to all of us and certainly to those who represent the inner cities.

And we must support the mission in our prisons for rehabilitation. And as they leave these incarceration provisions—or incarcerationsites, they must then have provisions that will help them get back in society in a more productive way.

So in closing, the National Foundation for Women's Legislative Policy on Crime, Justice, Terrorism and Substance Abuse has also been looking at the issue for several years now, and I have a very important report issued through the NFWL last year that shows that unresolved drug addiction is a $95 billion a year problem. And

NFWL also produced a second report analyzing one safe and cost-effective option for addressing the issue.

I would like these reports entered into the hearing record, Mr. Chairman, and request that we conduct a future hearing looking at this issue again.

And so I will submit them, without objection, to you.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you. At the very beginning of the hearing, I got unanimous consent that any Member who asked for inserts—so we will make sure that we put those documents into the record.

If I can again make clear to each of the witnesses—which I should have said a little bit ago—you will see the lights in front of you. You basically have 5 minutes. When the yellow comes on there is 1 to go. Your full statement will be in the record. If there are additional materials you want to put in after you hear the discussion today, we would be happy to do that as well. We appreciate your patience.

We have another panel after this one as well. But I very much appreciate also, I know Dr. Wilkinson, for example, moved his schedule around to accommodate today as opposed to tomorrow, and I am sure many others did as well.

At this point we are now going to go to Lorna Hogan, Washington, DC.

STATEMENT OF LORNA HOGAN

Ms. HOGAN. Good afternoon, members of the community. It is my privilege to be here today.

My name is Lorna Hogan. I am the mother of four children and at the age of 14, I began abusing marijuana and alcohol as a way of coping with being physically, mentally, and verbally abused.

I was afraid to tell anyone what was going on and self-medicating was the only way that I knew that could ease the pain. But after a while this combination was not working. I needed something stronger to help me cope with the abuse. I began using crack cocaine. This drug will take me to horrible places I would never imagine I would even go. The once clean police record I once had became stained with drug-related crimes I committed in order to support my habit.

My children were definitely affected by my drug use. I wasn't a mother to them. My grandmother was raising them, and when she became ill, I began leaving them with other people. I just couldn't stop using. I tried 28-day treatment programs, but I was just detoxing. I was not getting help for the emotional pain I kept suppressed by using drugs.

There were no services provided for me as a mother. There were no services for my children. There were no opportunities to heal as a family.

In December 2000 I was arrested on a drug-related charge, and my children were placed with Child Protective Services. And when I went before the judge in criminal court for sentencing, I begged him for treatment. The judge refused my request. I felt hopeless. I not only lost my children, I lost myself. I didn't know where my children were or what was happening to them. I felt I would never see them again.

In jail I received no treatment. I was surrounded by women like myself. We were all mothers who were all there in jail suffering from untreated addiction. But there were no treatment services in jail for us. When I was released, there were no referrals to aftercare treatment programs. Instead, I was released to the street at 10 p.m., with $4 in my pocket. I still didn't know where my children were. I went back to doing the only thing I knew how to do, use drugs. I felt myself sinking back into a life of self-degradation.

Months later, by the grace of God, I finally found someone to listen to me, a child welfare worker who was assigned to my case. I disclosed to her that I had been using drugs for 26 years. I was referred to an 18-month family treatment program.

The family treatment groups helped me to heal from domestic violence, helped me to understand that I was self-medicating to the problem instead of getting help for it. I had a therapist to help me address my childhood issues and my separation from my children. I had a primary counselor I could talk to at any time, and I still do. I also have parenting classes that gave me insight on being a mother.

Today I am a graduate of the family treatment program. I have 4 years' clean time from drugs and alcohol. My case with Child Protective Services is closed. My children and I have been unified for 3 years. We live in our own home in Montgomery County. My children are succeeding academically in school, and I recently watched with pride and joy as my children performed in a concert at school where they all sang in English, Japanese, and French. We are a whole and strong and loving family today.

I would like to conclude my story by sharing with you how critical it is for women to receive treatment while they are incarcerated. Most incarcerated mothers are nonviolent drug felons, and they are untreated drug addicts. Mothers behind bars receive little or no opportunity to heal from the disease of addiction. This lack of treatment and support services for mothers is apparent in every point of their involvement with the criminal justice system.

Pretrial diversion, release services, court-sentence alternatives, and reentry programs for women offenders are restricted in number, size, and effectiveness. Mothers behind bars and mothers reentering the community need treatment. Mothers need comprehensive family treatment so that they may heal and break the cycle of addiction and the revolving door of the criminal justice system. If treatment is made available to mothers behind bars, to mothers returning to the community, so many families will have a real chance to heal from the disease of addiction. And, like my family, they will have a chance to heal and not be lost to the criminal justice system.

Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Hogan follows:]

TESTIMONY OF
LORNA HOGAN
MOTHER ADVOCATE
THE REBECCA PROJECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
WASHINGTON, DC

OVERSIGHT HEARING: CONFRONTING RECIDIVISM: PRISONER RE-ENTRY AND A JUST FUTURE FOR ALL AMERICANS

THE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 2, 2005

Good afternoon Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to be here today. My name is Lorna Hogan and I am the mother of four children. At the age of fourteen, I began abusing marijuana and alcohol as a way of coping with being physically, mentally, and verbally abused. I was afraid to tell anyone what was going on and self-medicating was the only way I knew that could ease the pain. After awhile, this combination was not working, I needed something stronger to help me cope with the abuse. I began using crack cocaine.

This drug would take me to horrible places I never imagined I would even go. The once clean police record I had became stained with drug related crimes I committed in order to support my habit. My children were definitely affected by my drug use. I wasn't a mother to them. My grandmother was raising them and when she became ill, I began leaving them with other people.

I just couldn't stop using. I had tried 28 day treatment programs but I was just detoxing. I was not getting help for the emotional pain I kept suppressed by using drugs. There were no services provided for me as a mother. There were no services for my children. There were no opportunities to heal as a family.

In December, 2000, I was arrested on a drug related charge and my children were placed with Child Protective Services. When I went before the judge in criminal court for sentencing, I begged him for treatment. The judge told me he heard it before. He told me that so many people come before him requesting treatment and the same individuals would appear before him again. I felt hopeless. I not only lost my children, I lost myself. I didn't know where my children were or what was happening to them. I felt I would never see them again.

In jail, I received no treatment. I was surrounded by women like myself, mothers with minor children. We were all there, in jail, suffering from untreated addiction, but there were no treatment services in jail for us.

When I was released there were no referrals to aftercare treatment programs. Instead I was released to the street at ten o'clock at night with four dollars in my pocket. I still didn't know where my children were. I went back to doing the only thing I knew, which was using drugs. I felt myself sinking back into a life of self-degradation.

Months later, by the grace of God, I finally found someone to listen to me, a child welfare worker who was assigned to my case. I disclosed to her that I had been using drugs for 26 years. I was referred to an 18 month family treatment program. The family treatment groups helped me to heal from domestic violence, helped me to understand that I was self-medicating to the problem instead of getting help for it. I had a therapist to help me address my childhood issues and my separation from my children. I had a primary counselor I could talk to at any time and I still do. I also had parenting classes that gave me insight on being a mother.

Today I am a graduate of the family treatment program. I acknowledge four years clean time from drugs and alcohol. My case with child protective services is closed. My children and I have been reunified for three years. We live in our own home in Montgomery County. My children are succeeding academically in school. I recently watched with pride and joy as my

children performed in a fall concert at school where they all sang in English, Japanese and French. We are a whole and strong and loving family today.

I would like to conclude my story by sharing with you how critical it is for women to receive treatment while they are incarcerated. Most incarcerated mothers are non-violent drug felons and they are untreated addicts. Mothers behind bars receive little or no opportunity to heal from the disease of addiction. This lack of treatment and support services for mothers is apparent at every point in their involvement with the criminal justice system. Pre-trial diversion, release services, court-sentenced alternatives and re-entry programs for women offenders are restricted in number, size, and effectiveness.

Mothers behind bars and mothers reentering the community need treatment. Mothers need comprehensive family treatment so that they may heal, and break the cycle of addiction and the revolving door of the criminal justice system.

If treatment is made available to mothers behind bars, to mothers returning to the community, so many families will have a real chance to heal from the disease of addiction. Like my family, they will have the chance to heal and not be lost to the criminal justice system.

Thank you

Mr. SOUDER. Our next witness was already kind of somewhat introduced by a colleague from Maryland. Mr. Felix Mata, Baltimore City's Ex-Offender Mayor's Initiative Office of Employment Development. Thank you for your patience today.

STATEMENT OF FELIX MATA

Mr. MATA. Thank you.

Good afternoon, Chairman Souder, Ranking Member Cummings, and all the other honorable members of the subcommittee. My name is Felix Mata and I manage Baltimore's Citywide Ex-offender Initiative within Mayor Martin O'Malley's Office of Employment Development. I would like to thank you for the invitation to testify before you.

As you may know, over the last 5 years, we have witnessed a surge in the public's interest to create new reentry initiatives in the United States. Already along the East Coast, there are several ex-offender initiatives occurring. Besides the city of Baltimore, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, DC, and Chicago are a few areas where task forces aimed at addressing this issue have started. However, the problem is not only an urban problem.

In the Washington, DC, corridor, Prince George's County, Montgomery County, and Fairfax County have all started a reentry and/or gang task force to look at the problems of reentry or to prevent youth from entering the prison system.

On the Federal level, a reentry Policy Council, a collaboration of the U.S. Department of Justice and Labor and Health and Human Services was created to further look at ways that addressed the issue of reintegration.

With regards to the city of Baltimore, each year over 9,000 individuals returned to the city from Maryland prison facilities, with over 1,000 returning from the Federal prison facilities. Close to 20,000 individuals are under mandatory supervision through the Division of Parole and Probation, and over 60,000 individuals filtered through the local detention center in Baltimore City. Our mayor, Martin O'Malley, and the Mayor's Office of Employment Development, facilitated the creation of the Baltimore City-wide Ex-offender Task Force in October 2002.

With members representing more than 100 government agencies, nonprofit and community-based service providers, the task force worked in committees, including those addressing the needs and engagement of employers; a survey of existing services to support the needs of the population; the development of a model program to assist ex-offenders re-enter society; a review of relevant legislation; a focus on the involvement of the faith community in reentry; and, last, examination of transitional housing needs for ex-offenders.

Based on the work of the committee, the task force found that the average ex-offender returning to Baltimore City is: one, African American; two, male, ages between 20 to 40, with an average age to 33; and has little more than a sixth grade education.

A typical ex-inmate returning to the city of Baltimore receives no more than $40 upon release. With very little education and/or training, owes $8,000 in child support, has no transportation, no

medication, has no place to stay and cannot find legitimate employment, but wants to turn his life around.

A myriad of services must be made available for this population: housing assistance; physical and mental health aid; substance abuse treatment; child support modification support; access to identification; education and training; and employment opportunities.

In March 2004, the mayor appointed the Baltimore Citywide Reentry and Reintegration Steering Committee to carry out selected recommendations of the task force. In the last 2 years, we have seen some significant progress in reintegrating ex-offenders into Baltimore. One example is a collaborative project between the Mayor's Office of Employment Development and the Division of Parole and Probation, by placing one staff member to handle P&P's clientele have made a big difference. The result of this collaboration has linked over 1,200 ex-offenders to services in the past year.

Through the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, funding has been brought in to create another position in the east side of Baltimore.

Last, encouraging more employers to hire ex-offenders has been the aim of the three employer appreciation breakfasts sponsored by the steering committees. These breakfasts allow businesses in the community to recognize businesses that hire ex-offenders. Due to the tremendous success of this event, at our last breakfast on December 14, 2004, we had over 300 people in attendance, over 100 business representatives from over 36 businesses. The event has even received sponsorship now, the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation.

Even though the city of Baltimore has done a tremendous amount of work, we have a long way to go. The city is currently looking at a new and bolder approach of reentry by setting up a one-stop reentry center in northwest Baltimore. With the help of both State and Federal Government, Baltimore will be able to better assist the returning population.

Once again, I want to thank you for this opportunity to testify, and I am happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much for your testimony.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Mata follows:]

"Confronting Recidivism: Prisoner Re-entry Programs and a Just Future for All Americans."

Felix Mata, Project Manager for Baltimore's Citywide Ex-offender Initiative
Testimony before the Committee on Government Reform – Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources
Rayburn House Office Building
Room 2247
Washington, DC
February 3, 2005

Good Afternoon Chairman Davis, Ranking Member Waxman, Representative Cummings, and other honorable Members of the Government Reform Committee. My name is Félix Mata and I manage Baltimore's Citywide Ex-offender Initiative within Mayor Martin O'Malley's Office of Employment Development (MOED). I would like to thank you for the invitation to testify before you. I share your concern that recidivism is a very critical issue facing our nation and in particular our urban communities.

As you may know, over the last five (5) years we have witnessed a surge in the public's interest to review current and create new reentry initiatives in the United States of America. Already along the east coast there are several ex-offender initiatives occurring. Besides the City of Baltimore, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Chicago are a few areas where task forces aimed at addressing the issues of offender reentry are in place. However, this problem is not only limited to the larger urban populations, but smaller communities are facing a similar dilemma on what to do about those individuals returning from the justice system back into society. Just last year Savannah, Georgia began to look at reentry as part of their new Public Safety Task Force. In the Washington, DC corridor – Prince George's, Montgomery, and Fairfax Counties have all started a reentry and/or gang task force to look at the problem of reentry or to prevent youth from entering the prison system. On the federal level, through efforts such as this, you and your colleagues authorized the Serious Violent Offender and Reentry Initiative (SVORI), which allocates up to $2 million to states for building reentry programs. In addition, a Re-entry Policy Council, a collaboration of the U.S. Departments of Justice, Labor, and Health and Human Services, was created to further explore ways to successfully address the issue of reintegration.

With regards to the City of Baltimore, the situation is significant. For instance:

- Each year, over 9,000 people return to the City from Maryland's prison facilities; with over 1,000 returning from federal prison facilities;
- Close to 20,000 individuals living in Baltimore are under mandatory supervision through the Division of Parole and Probation; and
- Over 60,000 individuals filter through the local detention center each year.

All of these individuals need employment in order to ensure their reentry to their community is positive and productive. But, in many instances, helping make this connection to the workplace goes beyond simply getting a job.

Our Mayor, Martin O'Malley and the Mayor's Office of Employment Development facilitated the creation of Baltimore's Citywide Ex-offender Task Force, in October 2002, to bring together diverse stakeholders to develop a citywide plan to assist ex-offenders in successfully transitioning back to the community.

With members representing more than 100 government agencies, nonprofit and community-based service providers, major foundations, advocacy groups and the faith-based community, the Task Force worked in committees including those addressing:

1. The needs and engagement of employers;
2. A survey of existing services to support the needs of the population;
3. The development of a model program or process for serving ex-offenders;
4. A review of relevant legislation;
5. A focus on the involvement of the faith community; and
6. An examination of transitional housing needs for ex-offenders.

Based on the work of its committees, which met for 18 months, the Task Force released the Baltimore Citywide Ex-offender Task Force Report and Recommendations in December 2003. This plan seeks to integrate, enhance and expand services for ex-offenders. The Task Force found that the average ex-offender returning to Baltimore is: African-American (90%), male (90%), is between the ages of 20 to 40 (with an average age of 33), and has little more than a sixth (6th) grade education.

A typical ex-inmate returning to Baltimore receives no more than $40 upon release, with very little education and/or training, owes $8,000 in child support, has no transportation, no medication to manage his mental illness, has no place to stay, and cannot find legitimate employment, but wants to turn his life around. As shared earlier, the needs of ex-offenders extend beyond receiving a job or participating in a training program. A myriad of services must be made available for this population. These include:

1. Housing assistance;
2. Physical and mental health aid;
3. Substance abuse treatment;
4. Child support modification support;
5. Access to identification;
6. Education and training; and
7. Employment opportunities.

In March 2004, the Mayor appointed The Baltimore Citywide Re-entry and Reintegration Steering Committee to carry out selected recommendations of the Task Force. Maryland State Delegate Salima Marriott and Maryland State Senator Nathaniel McFadden, both of who lead their respective statewide delegations for Baltimore City, currently co-chair the steering committee and provide a strong nexus between the City and State's work around these issues.

The last two years have seen some significant progress in reintegrating ex-offenders into Baltimore. One example is the collaborative project that we launched between the Mayor's Office of Employment Development and the Division of Parole and Probation, which placed one staff member in the City's Northwest One-Stop Career Center to connect ex-offenders to employment, training, and other services. The results of this collaboration have linked over 1,200 ex-offenders to services in the past year. Through Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation funding, an Ex-offender Change Agent was created for Baltimore's Eastside Career Center to work with ex-offenders in that community. Advocacy and legislative efforts have been supported for better opportunities for ex-offenders in Maryland including, increasing education and training programs behind the fence and an expansion of Baltimore's work release programs. The Steering Committee published an informational CD-Rom and resource guide for service providers and government agencies to inform their clients on what programs assist ex-offenders in Baltimore City. Lastly, encouraging more employers to hire ex-offenders has been the aim of the three Employer Appreciation Breakfasts sponsored by the Steering Committee and its partners. These breakfasts allows government agencies and the community to recognize businesses that hire ex-offenders and their exemplary staff. During the first breakfast in May 2003, approximately 150

guests were in attendance. Due to the tremendous success of this event, our December 20(breakfast received over 300 guests with 36 businesses and over 100 business representatives attendance. The event has received sponsorship by the Harry and Jeanette Weinbe Foundation.

Even though the City of Baltimore has done a tremendous amount of work to assist ex-offender much more is needed to properly assist this population. The City is currently looking at a ne and bold approach of reentry by setting up a One-Stop Center where ex-offenders can receive ; of the services they would need in becoming responsible citizens of our community. We a actively seeking funding from foundations, government agencies, and others to make this reality. With the help of both the state and federal government Baltimore will be able to bett assist this returning population.

Once again, I want to thank you for this opportunity to testify before you. I am happy to answ questions that you may have or address any concerns.

Mr. SOUDER. Our next witness was also introduced earlier by Delegate Norton.

Mr. Paul Quander is with the District of Columbia's Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency. He represents that agency.

Thank you for coming today.

STATEMENT OF PAUL A. QUANDER, JR.

Mr. QUANDER. Thank you. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, good afternoon. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. I also want to thank the committee for scheduling this reentry hearing during Reentry Week here in the District of Columbia. 2005 marks the 4th consecutive year that the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency [CSOSA] has collaborated with local faith institutions and the District of Columbia Government to present a full week of events highlighting the needs of returning offenders.

Tomorrow night our third annual Citywide Reentry Assembly will be held at St. Luke's Center on East Capitol Street. We will gather to thank our volunteers and to hear directly from offenders who are receiving faith-based support. I invite all of you to join us for an informative and inspirational evening.

I would also like to submit for the record a copy of the comprehensive reentry strategy for adults in the District of Columbia that was prepared in conjunction with the District of Columbia government and faith institutions and members of the community who are previously incarcerated individuals.

I would like to share with the committee a few of the reentry strategies that we have in place. In 2001 we reached out to the city's clergy and began our Faith/Community Partnership. Our goal has been to connect returning offenders with institutions and individuals who can support them both during and after their term of supervision. Within our Faith/Community Partnership, three lead institutions identify and broker mentoring and other services for returning offenders and their families. We currently have a network of 46 participating faith institutions, as well as approximately 200 volunteer mentors.

While faith-based support does not replace CSOSA's treatment and education program, it supplements and augments our supervision community officers, commonly referred to as probation and parole officers, their capacity to provide after-care and one-on-one interaction.

In 2003 we recognized the need to link returning offenders with services well before they actually are released to the community. Using teleconferencing and video technology, we took the Faith/Community Partnership into Rivers Correctional Institution, a Bureau of Prisons contract facility that houses over 1,000 D.C. code offenders.

Here in the District of Columbia we are unique in that every offender who is convicted of a crime in the District is sentenced to a Bureau of Prisons facility. And the Bureau tries to place these offenders within 500 miles, but oftentimes offenders are all apart in different facilities throughout the country. There are 1,000 individuals in Rivers, which is located in North Carolina.

That outreach has developed into regular community resource-based video conferences at which representatives from the Faith/Community Partnership and a variety of District social service agencies provide information to men nearing release. Partnership with CSOSA has encouraged our lead faith institutions to expand the range of services they provide.

For example, in response to the critical need for transitional housing, East of the River Clergy-Police-Community Partnership is converting a 14-unit apartment building into transitional housing for returning offenders. We cannot over-estimate the importance of stable housing to successful reentry. About 25 percent of the release plans we investigate prior to an individual being released do not contain a stable housing placement.

While we can often arrange for a short-term placement such as a public law placement in a halfway house, permanent solutions are much more difficult to achieve.

According to the District of Columbia's Department of Public Housing and Community Development, a household income of $40,000 per year, or roughly $20 an hour, is necessary to rent a two-bedroom apartment at market rate in this community. Almost half of the District households report income below that threshold. These are the households most likely to be impacted by reentry, and the returning offenders compete directly with other workers in these households for a limited supply of viable jobs.

Approximately half the offenders under supervision are unemployed at any given time. Unstable housing and precarious employment undermine the individuals' chances for success. To put it in the words of one of the offenders, "To get a job you need an address, but to get an address you need a job."

We are working with District non-profits to identify additional housing resources. We are also addressing the public safety concerns that are integral to any discussion of offender housing.

In 2004 we executed a memorandum of understanding with the District of Columbia Housing Authority to share information about offenders who are living in public housing similar to our successful partnership with the Metropolitan Police Department.

For men and women with severe long-term substance abuse problems, intensive intervention has to begin at the moment of release. These offenders cannot negotiate reentry without intensive support.

We have developed and implemented a program at our Assessment and Orientation Center that takes offenders directly upon release and puts them through 30 days of assessment, counseling, and treatment to prepare them for reentry. And for most, that means continued drug treatment as well.

This program has had a positive effect on recidivism. For one cohort of the participants, arrest rates dropped 75 percent. Based upon the Assessment and Orientation Center's proven success, we are expanding it into a Reentry and Expansion Center that will serve approximately 1,200 high-risk offenders and defendants each year. Our first two units are scheduled to open in November 2005.

No matter how aggressively we supervise offenders in the community, we cannot guarantee their success. Too many variables influence reentry for the outcomes to rest solely on enforcement. Ac-

cording to the Urban Institute, family support, substance abuse treatment, and employment assistance are what returning offenders need the most. These essentials can only be provided through concerted, sustained collaborations in which all partners contribute to the true goal of reentry initiatives: the restoration of individuals, families, and our communities.

I thank you again for the opportunity to participate in this hearing, and I will respond to questions at the appropriate time.

Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you for your testimony.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Quander follows:]

STATEMENT

BY

Paul A. Quander, Jr.
Director
Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency
For the District of Columbia

BEFORE THE

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform
February 2, 2005

Chairman Davis and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I want to begin by commending the committee for scheduling a reentry hearing during Reentry Week. 2005 marks the fourth consecutive year that the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) has collaborated with faith institutions in the District of Columbia, as well as the District government, to present a full week of events highlighting the needs of returning offenders. We also appeal to local faith institutions to dedicate a service to the issue of reentry. I attended reentry services at two churches last Sunday, and our week will close out with a Muslim prayer service at Howard University on Friday.

Tomorrow night, our third annual Citywide Reentry Assembly will be held at St. Luke Center on East Capitol Street. We will gather to thank the many volunteers who mentor offenders, to recognize the lead institutions in our Faith/Community Partnership, and to hear directly from offenders who are receiving faith-based support. I invite all of you to join us for an inspirational evening.

All of us here know the statistics of reentry. The District of Columbia is no different from any other city, in that each year more than two thousand prisoners return home to our neighborhoods. For the most part, they are unskilled and undereducated, with long histories of substance abuse and arrest, but short histories of gainful

employment and stability. They are older than you might realize, with an average age of 35. For their entire adult lives, they have cycled in and out of prison. It is the most stable environment many of them have ever known.

We also know that when we consider reentry, we have to think not just about the individual offender but about the small and large systems they impact. Families, the neighborhoods, the broader community, our city and in fact the entire metropolitan area are affected, positively or negatively, by the actions of returning offenders.

We at CSOSA view community supervision as both a public safety duty and a public service opportunity. Our mission is to enhance public safety through effective supervision. If we achieve that mission, we will reduce recidivism and in doing so reduce the number of D.C. residents and visitors who are victimized. But there is another side to reducing recidivism. For every offender who does not commit a new crime, there is the possibility of a productive citizen who holds a job, parents a child, and contributes to his or her community. Effective community supervision is not just the prevention of wrong-doing, it is the encouragement of right-doing.

That is why in 2001 we reached out to the city's clergy and began our Faith/Community Partnership. Our goal has been to connect returning offenders with institutions and individuals who can support them not only during their supervision, but also can serve as a resource and a haven long after the term of supervision has ended. Many offenders have never known a positive, accepting, non-criminal community. Volunteer mentors can introduce offenders to a different type of environment and a new circle of acquaintances.

Many offenders also don't know that churches run substance abuse support groups, men's support groups, family ministries, clothing banks, and other support programs. Within our Faith/Community Partnership, three lead institutions identify and broker these services to maximize the support available to returning offenders and their families. Faith-based support does not replace CSOSA's treatment and education

programs, but it supplements our capacity with aftercare and more one-on-one contact than the Community Supervision officer can provide. We currently have a network of 46 participating faith institutions and approximately 200 volunteer mentors. This is a significant resource for offenders and their families to draw upon.

In 2003 we recognized that we needed to begin the process of linking returning offenders with services well before they were released from prison. Using teleconferencing technology, we took the Faith/Community Partnership into the Rivers Correctional Institution, a Bureau of Prisons contract facility that houses over 1,000 D.C. code offenders. That outreach has developed into regular Community Resource Day videoconferences, at which representatives from the Faith/Community Partnership and a variety of District social service agencies provide information to men nearing release.

Partnership with CSOSA has encouraged our lead faith institutions to expand the range of services they provide. The East of the River Clergy-Police-Community Partnership received a grant last year to implement the Department of Labor's Ready4Work initiative. East of the River is also converting a 14-unit apartment building into transitional housing for returning offenders. CSOSA also partnered with Rev. Anthony Motley to co-locate a Learning Lab and a community housing resource center at the Bellevue Center in far Southeast.

The issue of housing reminds us that no matter how committed we are to developing partnerships and leveraging existing resources, some of the problems of reentry require more than collaboration to solve. According to the District's Department of Housing and Community Development, a household income of $40,000 per year, or roughly $20 per hour, is necessary to rent a two-bedroom apartment at market rate. Almost half of District households report an income of less than that. These are the households most likely to be impacted by reentry—and returning offenders compete directly with other workers in these households for a limited supply of viable jobs. About 25 percent of the release plans we investigate do not contain a stable housing placement. Alternative arrangements have to be made, such as temporary "Public Law"

placement in halfway houses or, in some cases, referral to a city homeless shelter. We are working with non-profits within the District—such as Our Place DC, which provides services to women offenders, East of the River, and the Marshall Heights Community Development Organization—to raise awareness of the housing issue and develop strategies to increase funding for transitional housing. We also support efforts to bring the Delancey Street model of self-supporting transitional housing and entrepreneurship to the District of Columbia.

Finally, we know that offender housing raises public safety concerns. In 2004, we executed a memorandum of understanding with the D.C. Housing Authority to share information about offenders living in public housing, similar to our successful partnership with the Metropolitan Police Department. This type of collaborative policing reinforces accountability and makes it harder for offenders to fall "under the radar" of detection.

Viable housing is impossible without viable employment. Returning offenders face significant obstacles to getting and keeping jobs that pay enough to live; about half of the offenders under CSOSA's supervision are unemployed at any given time. Our Vocational Development Specialists work not just on improving the offender's skills but on encouraging employers to hire them. Increasing employers' willingness to hire and train ex-offenders is essential to successful reentry programming. To that end, we are collaborating with the District to implement Project Empowerment Plus, which combines life skills training with subsidized employment. As part of Reentry Week, I will attend a graduation ceremony for the life skills portion of the program.

For many offenders, nothing is a more accurate predictor of recidivism than relapse into drug use. We see time and again that drug use is the first link in a chain that drags the offender back to prison. For men and women with long-term, severe substance abuse problems, intensive intervention has to begin at the moment of release. We have developed and implemented an intensive program at our Assessment and Orientation Center that takes offenders directly after release and puts them through 30 days of assessment, counseling, fatherhood classes, and treatment groups to ensure that they are

prepared for reentry—and for most, that means inpatient or outpatient drug treatment as well. Evaluation indicates that this program has a positive effect on recidivism; participants were as much as 75 percent less likely to be arrested. Over 1,300 offenders have completed this program since 1996.

Based on the proven success of the program, we are expanding the AOC into a Reentry and Sanctions Center that will provide this level of programming to over 1,200 high-risk offenders and defendants each year. We are currently renovating space for this program, and the first two units are scheduled to open in November of 2005.

I am proud of CSOSA's progress in putting a successful reentry program in place, and particularly of our collaboration with the city to develop the *Citywide Reentry Strategy*. The strategy takes a systemic look at reentry, focusing on the multiple areas of need and the multiple agencies that influence and implement solutions. The Reentry Strategy resulted from a three-year collaborative process and we are confident that it will inform the discussion of reentry for many more years to come.

As Congress debates reentry issues, I hope we do not confine discussion of reentry to the criminal justice arena but broaden it to all related areas—drug policy, family policy, employment policy, and housing policy. I hope that we continue to link volunteerism with reentry and reach out to the faith community so that more returning offenders can experience first-hand their neighbors' compassion and commitment. We must also remain mindful of the need to restore healthy parents to the children devastated by incarceration.

As a lifelong resident of the District, like my parents before me, I have seen too clearly how a neighborhood is wounded when most of its young men are incarcerated. As Director of CSOSA, I am committed to putting as many healing tools in place as possible and encouraging our partners to do the same. Our discussion of reentry must always include the child, the victim, the grandmother, and the businessman as well as the offender. Community supervision is an essential aspect of reentry, but no matter how

aggressively we supervise, we cannot achieve success on our own. Too many variables influence reentry for the outcome to rest solely on enforcement. According to the Urban Institute's analysis of reentry in Baltimore, family support, substance abuse treatment, and employment assistance are what returning offenders need most. Those essentials can only be provided through concerted, sustained collaborations in which all partners contribute to the restoration of individuals, families, and communities. That should be the true goal of all reentry initiatives.

I thank you again for the opportunity to participate in this hearing.

Mr. SOUDER. Our next witnesses, Jim McNeil and David Russell, mentor and protege of the InnerChange Freedom Initiative.

It is good to see you again. I heard you at the breakfast last fall with a lot of Senators and House Members. Thank you for coming for an official government hearing here to give your testimony today.

Mr. McNeil.

STATEMENT OF JIM McNEIL

Mr. MCNEIL. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Jim McNeil, and I am from Richmond, a suburb of Houston, TX. I am retired and a volunteer worker in InnerChange Freedom Initiative Ministry, a branch of Prison Fellowship. I, along with my wife, moved from west Texas to the Houston area 5 years ago to be near our 5 children and watch our 11 grandchildren grow up.

Shortly after moving, I was invited to a Church Missions Meeting and was introduced to the InnerChange Ministry. After a visit there, I signed on as a volunteer worker, counseling and setting up the substance abuse curriculum.

For years I have been concerned about the prison population explosion and offenders going to prison at an early age and continuing to return. When they have reached their 40's, they see a life slipping by, and by this time don't know how to function in society.

There are many good prison ministries. But I saw the InnerChange Ministry as one that worked with the offenders after release. During this timeframe, my wife and I started mentoring offenders who were enrolled in the ministry.

To date, we have mentored 12 fellows; 2 have returned to prison, much to our disappointment, and 8 are out and doing well, and 2 have yet to be released. All of these fellows and their families are our extended families. They call us regularly, visit with us at our home, take care of us, consult us on living problems and family problems, and even help with chores at our home.

Our home is their home, and our door is open to all of them. They continue to bless my wife and me and give us a lot of pleasure.

Let me close in commending you on your task in prison reform. It must be addressed and dealt with. Rehabilitation has to be brought off the back burner. These people must be prepared to take their responsible places in our society and be productive citizens and positive family members.

As a closing thought for you, more tax moneys are being spent in our State on prisons than on public education.

Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McNeil follows:]

Testimony of Jim McNeil

Before the Committee on Government Reform

Hearing On Prisoner Reentry

February 3, 2005

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jim McNeill and I'm from Richmond, a suburb of Houston, Texas. I am retired and a volunteer worker in the InnerChange Freedom Initiative Ministry, a branch of Prison Fellowship.

I, along with my wife, moved from West Texas to the Houston area seven years ago, to be near our five children and to watch our eleven grandchildren grow up.

Shortly after moving, I was invited to a Church Missions Meeting and was introduced to the InnerChange Ministry. After a visit there I signed on as a volunteer worker, counseling and setting up the Substance Abuse curriculum. For years I had been concerned about the prison population explosion and offenders going to prison at an early age and continuing to return. When they have reached their forties they see life slipping by, and by this time don't know how to function in society. There are many prison ministries that are very good, but I saw in the InnerChange Ministry one that worked with the offenders after release. During this time frame my wife and I started mentoring offenders who were enrolled in the Ministry. To date we have mentored twelve fellows. Two have returned to prison, much to our disappointment, and eight are out and doing quiet well and two have not been released yet. All of these fellows and their families are our extended family. They call us regularly, visit with us in our home, take care of us, consult us on their living and family problems, even help with chores at our home. Our home is their home and our door is open to all of them. They continue to bless my wife and me and give us a lot of pleasure.

Let me close in commending you on your task in prison reform. It must be addressed and dealt with. Rehabilitation has got to be brought off the back burner. These people must be prepared to take their responsible places in our society and

be productive citizens and positive family members. As a closing thought for you, more tax monies are being spent in our State on prisons than on public education.

Thank You

J.C.(Jim) McNeill IV

606 Fernglade Drive

Richmond, Texas 77469

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Russell.

STATEMENT OF DAVID RUSSELL

Mr. RUSSELL. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is David Russell. I was born in Abilene, TX. I am a graduate of the InnerChange Freedom Initiative Ministry, and now a volunteer of IFI.

I made a decision to transfer a few years after my second incarceration from west Texas to the Houston area, believing and trusting in God to provide a way for my transition into a new surrounding.

Years into my second incarceration, I knew there had to be a better way of life. I just didn't know where to begin, to start it or even begin. But years had passed by. Things started becoming clearer to me that the only way was to let God's will for my life start to prevail.

Not knowing much as to what was in store for me and this new way of life, of living, I started to see things a lot more clearly than before, but still not sure where God was taking me. I just started to trust and believe in God's word.

Then it happened. A program was being put into effect in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice system called the InnerChange Freedom Initiative Program. It originated in the Houston area, but there were still many hurdles I had to overcome. It seemed as though I would never get there.

Another year passed by since I heard of the program, and it happened. I was being transferred to another unit in the TDCJ system. Not knowing which unit I would be transferred to, I started wondering would I ever be able to get away from my past.

A couple of days later I went for classification. I was told my next unit to where I would be assigned would be the Jester 2 Unit. The Jester 2 Unit, now the Carol S. Vance Unit, was where the InnerChange Freedom Initiative Program was now in process. I had gotten past another obstacle in my life, on my way to a new life.

A year had gone by since transfer to the Jester 2 Unit. I was still not in the program as of yet. But then it happened. A couple of IFI members that I have been working with, and also built a friendship with, asked me if I wanted to become a member of the IFI program, and I said yes without any hesitation. So they took me to see the program director, the program manager, and I gave them my information.

Weeks later I was accepted into the program, and God continued to move in my life. Doors began to open. My new way of life began to flourish. There I met my mentor, Jim McNeil. This was just one of many relationships that were built within the IFI program. Other relationships would also form that were still just as strong as my relationship with my mentor. Jim and Joyce are my extended family, and I love them dearly. I am blessed to have many Christian people in my life that will guide me and encourage me as I continue my growth with Christ Jesus.

Let me close my saying that other offenders will benefit from the Prison Reform Act. The current rehabilitation process must be addressed and dealt with. Not rehabilitation but transformation. It

has to be brought into the foreground of offenders' incarceration. Offenders must be prepared to take their responsible places in our society and be productive citizens and provide for a family member; not to be the problem of a society, but to be a part of the solution of the society.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Russell follows:]

Testimony of David Russell

Before the Committee on Government Reform

Hearing on Prisoner Reentry

February 3, 2005

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is David Russell, and I was born in Abilene, Texas. I am a graduate of the Innerchange Freedom Initiative Ministry (IFI) and now a volunteer of IFI.

I made a decision to transfer (after a few years into my second incarceration) from West Texas to the Houston area believing and trusting in God to provide a way for my transition into a new surrounding.

Years into my second incarceration I knew there had to be a better way of life. I just didn't know where to start or even begin. But as years passed by, things started to become clearer to me, that the only way was to let God's will for my life start to prevail. Not knowing much as to what was in store for me in this new way of living, I started to see things a lot more clearly than before. But still not sure where God was taking me, I just started to trust and believe in God's word. Then it happened. A program was being put into effect in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice System called the Innerchange Freedom Initiative Program. It originated in the Houston area, but there were still many hurdles I had to overcome. It seemed as though I would never get there. Another year had passed by since I heard of the program, and then it happened. I was being transferred to another unit in the TDCJ system. Not knowing which unit I was being transferred to, I started wondering would I ever be able to get away from my past. A couple of days later I went before classification, and I was told my next unit to where I would be assigned would be the Jester 2 Unit. The Jester 2 Unit, now the Carol S. Vance Unit, was where the Innerchange Freedom Initiative program was now in process. I had gotten past another obstacle on my way to a new life.

A year had gone by since my transfer to the Jester 2 Unit. I was still not in the program as of yet, but then it happened a couple of IFI members that I had worked with and also built a friendship with, asked me if I wanted to become a member of the IFI program and I said yes without any hesitation. So they took me to see the program Director and program Manager and I gave them my information. Weeks later I was accepted into the program and God continued to move in my life. Doors began to open and my new way of life began to flourish. There I met my mentor, Jim McNeill. This was just one of many relationships that were built while in the IFI program. Other relationships were also formed that were still just as strong as my relationship with my mentor. Jim and Joyce McNeill are my extended family and I love them dearly. I'm blessed to have many Christian people in my life that will guide and encourage me as I continue my growth with Christ Jesus.

Let me close by saying that other offenders will benefit from the prison reform act. The current rehabilitation process must be addressed and dealt with. Not rehabilitation, but transformation has to be brought into the foreground of the offender's incarceration. Offenders must be prepared to take their responsible places in our society and be productive citizens and positive family members. Not to be the problem in society, but a part of the solution.

Thank You
David Russell
12151 Huntington Venture
Houston, Texas 77099

Mr. SOUDER. I thank you all for your testimony.

Let me start first by thanking each of you for your work. And this is an incredibly difficult area, and I think for those in Congress and those listening to the testimony that it is very easy to raise false expectations about what we can do.

Even Mr. McNeil, in intensive personal mentoring, has said that several people have gone back into prison; that I know many taxpayers look at these types of programs and say you are spending all of this money on it and yet the recidivism rate went up.

But this is not easy. Partly we come, and hear people come, and they tell us their great results, and sometimes they are short term, and we don't necessarily have longitudinal studies because we look at the numbers and see it go up.

But some people go back in within months. Some people go back 5 years later. And we have to develop a standard of measurement that's realistic here. We are not going to get 100 percent by putting all of this money in. We are not going to get that kind of rate of return; and then second, even if somebody goes back in or they go in for a lower level of crime than they went in the first time.

In other words, are we making some level of improvement? Is it going to be easier to do the rehabilitation? Is there some hope down the way here? Because if we hold up false hopes in front of Congress and say throw $112 million at this and recidivism goes up, we are going to have a huge problem.

A second part of this as we look at this legislation is the numbers you are looking at far overwhelm anything the Federal Government is going to be able to do. I mean, you are talking thousands in each city, whereas this Federal initiative will only touch thousands nationwide. Yet hopefully we will be able to do that.

So let me start with this question. Understanding that all the parts are important—housing, jobs, drug treatment, all these different parts—and understanding that in D.C. alone you have 2,000—we heard 9,000 in Los Angeles, the number has to be even higher—how would you best target these dollars, and how do you figure out who should be eligible for the limited funds you have? Should it be those who show the best opportunity to rehabilitate; those who are the hardest cases; those who are first in line? How are you going to allocate these funds and how would we best target what we are doing? If you would like to take that.

Mr. QUANDER. I will start.

As the director of CSOSA here in the District, we are also faced with limited options, resources. And so what we have decided to do, we have to tailor our approach and focus our resources where the greatest impact is going to be, and that's public safety and violent crime.

We have to target individuals who have the greatest indicator that if you don't receive the treatment, they are going out and they are going to create havoc in our communities. And so that's why we have built this Reentry and Sanction Center so that we target the greatest group.

Thirty percent of returning offenders who we have targeted we believe will cause the greatest amount of harm in our city. Now, if we can get those resources and if we can provide them with the

services that they need, we think we will have the biggest impact on reducing crime and helping the city become safer.

At the same time, we are reaching out to groups, churches in particular, because a lot of the churches in our community have faith-based organizations, have prison ministries, have clothing ministries, have housing ministries, and they need some assistance to help us do the work that we have.

When we hook up with existing church programs, we already have a viable vehicle that is already out there, that has substance in the community, and so we try to match that, the community part of it and the government part, and it can work.

We realize that the resources are limited. But if they are targeted in that way, we think that we will have the best chance for having the greatest impact on the citizens of the District of Columbia.

Mr. SOUDER. I want to ask Mr. Mata a question with a followup to that. But, for example, InnerChange Ministries, it's self-selected. In other words, you have to choose to go into that section of the prison, because it's a faith-based ministry?

Mr. RUSSELL. Yes, you have to volunteer.

Mr. SOUDER. And so that would be one way if it's a faith-based question.

We heard from Ms. Hogan about the mothers with children. Would that be another subtarget group because of the impact potentially on the children in the family, and how do you handle that, for example, in Baltimore?

Mr. MATA. The city of Baltimore actually looks at what everyone is doing. One of the great things we do is see what the city of Chicago is doing. The Shay Foundation actually builds a triangle and says the top level group of ex-offenders returning into the community, they don't really need our help. They can come back. We have the bottom level of that triangle, our ex-offenders, who no matter how much you can try to help them, you can spend money and time on them. They are not going to want to change their lives around. But you have that middle tier who just need an extra push. They need to be put into a training program, they need to get transitional housing. Those are the groups that you can help.

You can't expect an ex-offender who is coming out of prison to go through an 8 to 10-week training program to change their life around. It's going to take a number of kinds of different programs.

I look at the Baltimore Reentry Partnership Program. It's an actual 2-year program with a 70 percent success rate, but they also provide transitional housing. The case manager meets the person at the prison door when they are released and says, all right, let's go get you signed up. We are going to get you your identification, get you food stamps, get you all these other services that you need right now.

That's the type of dedication that it takes to get ex-offenders involved and to help turn them around.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

Mr. MCNEIL. Mr. Chairman, there are two things I would like to elaborate on.

One is the mentoring program. David's and my relationship started 2 years before he got out of the penitentiary, and I think

that is very important. Some people are mistaken that mentoring is picking up the guy when he gets out. If you don't know him when he gets out, he by nature is very suspicious of you.

The second is, Congressman Davis, I want to echo what you were talking about in substance abuse. I am a recovering alcoholic, so maybe I am a little bit more sensitive to that. But the numbers run side by side.

In the State of Texas because of budget restraints and the population explosion, TDCJ has cut back on their substance abuse programs within the penitentiary. That's a mistake.

And so I am not versed on where your money should go, but these are just two of the issues that I think are very important. Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Davis, if it's OK I will go to Ms. Norton next, because she didn't get questioning on the first panel.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. OK.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I'm sorry I didn't get to hear everyone's testimony. I just want to congratulate those of you who have been involved in delivering these services and those of you who have had the benefit of them. Because to have the benefit of them is not enough; you have to have a great deal of personal inner strength to take advantage of those services.

There's been a lot of emphasis, I think correctly, on services that join the community, such as mentoring services. The bill, Mr. Portman's, Mr. Davis' bill, shows us how at the beginning of this we all—when you talk about data collection is necessary, and how much of faith-based programs.

I would like to hear more from Mr. Quander. He is from the Federal system. It has a more developed system than any of the States. And here I have been critical of the way we go at law enforcement in the Federal system. At the same time, I want to say that the Federal prison system and its after-services are the best in the United States.

And I have some before and after, because Lorton, which is the city prison, was closed. The Federal Government took over, and it was night and day. Such an improvement. So there is the Federal system out there can be a real example for the States.

Right after, Mr. Quander, right after the Federal Government became involved with felons from the District of Columbia, there was literally, almost immediately, within the first few months, an immediate effect on recidivism. So much so that I went around the District of Columbia with a chart, showing people, because we were trying to get halfway houses placed in places. I recognize that over time it may not have been as great as it was then, but obviously you were having an effect on recidivism.

When we had a hearing, when Mr. Davis had a hearing here, we tried to learn more about what was happening. What impressed us was not at that point the community services. The community was still trying to get them to understand these were their children, their numbers, residents of the District of Columbia. They hadn't been dropped in from outer space. What impressed us was the services that CSOSA offered. The chairman could not be more correct: We are going to have to target whatever we are talking about.

I notice that in the testimony here from Reginald Wilkinson, he says that President Bush in his 2004 State of the Union urged Congress to allocate $300 million over 4 years to support reentry transition services. He named several kinds of services that he indicated the President had named: job training, placement services, transitional housing, community faith-based services. Some of that is very expensive.

Let me ask you about the services that I think have made a difference in the District of Columbia, which I think could be less expensive, and hear your response.

One was anger management services. These are very angry people. That's how they got there in the first place in some sense, and when they see how society views them, including their own neighbors, that builds up.

The other was inpatient and outpatient drug treatment, so much so that you have some facilities here.

And then, as I recall, there was a step, everybody got tested. So that if, in fact, you get tested dirty, you are one step back to prison. I wish you would describe those services, see if they are available, and the effect they have had.

Because a lot of your testimony, Mr. Quander, was about things like community services, faith-based and the other services we are all for, but very frankly, I don't think that's what the difference is in the District of Columbia so far if we are talking about the difference in recidivism rates.

I would just like you to lay out for us what—at least these—I am not even into transitional housing. I mean, you may have to bunk up with somebody for a long time. I am into what it takes to get through every day without punching somebody in the nose, maybe even your parole officer, and going back to jail, because you are still on drugs, because you are not being tested, because there are no incentives to stay out and stay clean.

Mr. QUANDER. One of the first things that we were able to accomplish with the help of this Congress was we were able to reduce the caseloads of the men and women who supervise offenders.

When we first started this agency, the average caseload was well over 100. Today, for our general service units, it's less than 50 to 1. Some of our specialized units, the sex offender unit, the domestic violator unit, even traffic is down to 25 or 30 to 1. So it allows our men and women who have the training and dedication to work with the men and women who are under supervision, to provide services and to keep them focused and accountable.

As far as anger management is concerned, we offer anger management because people need to understand how to deal with the day-to-day frustrations. Many of us have parents and guardians and coaches that helped and taught us how to work and to navigate and negotiate.

Many of the men and women that we see have never had anyone. And so after a period of incarceration, after going through the court services, people are angry, they are frustrated, and they are easily dissuaded. So we try to build in anger management and coping skills.

As far as substance abuse, we drug test. Everyone that comes into the door has to drug test, and we have graduated sanctions be-

cause we want to work with individuals. But our offenders know that if you test positive there will be immediate sanctions.

We don't have to go back to court. We don't have to go back to the parole authorities. We have the authority to sanction individuals. And those sanctions can be anywhere from going to AA meetings to actually being under house arrest or actually having a bracelet placed upon you for global positioning satellite monitoring so we know what you are doing 24 hours, 7 days a week.

It is important that there is——

Ms. NORTON. Now, if you continue to offend, are the next steps back so that people know that they could end up back in jail?

Mr. QUANDER. It's clear that if you continue to offend, that's exactly where you are going. But we want to give people the opportunity.

We have to be clear as to what the expectations are; that if you reoffend, that if you have these technical violations, you will definitely go back. Our mission is to try to get them to turn their lives around, know what they are facing is to correct that path so that we can keep them here in our community.

Ms. NORTON. It is a real carrot-stick.

Mr. QUANDER. It is but a major component is the substance abuse treatment. If you don't give individuals time away from this environment, it's sort of a like a man on a diet who lives right above the Burger King Restaurant. He smells the hamburger cooking, the food day in and day out, but our community is even more pervasive than that.

The person doesn't have to smell it upstairs, the drugs are right in the house. Grandmother has the drugs, sister has the drugs. When you walk out on the street, all your partners and friends have the drugs. They are all enticing you. They are all saying come on, come back.

And so we need money and resources so that we can get people out of that environment, get them away, get them where people who have gone through this type of process say, hey, I have made it.

It takes time, it takes effort, it takes money. On average, it cost us $14,000 per individual that we put through treatment. Three phases—detox, inpatient, and that outpatient component is just so critical.

That's where that faith-based component also comes in, because you need a mentor sometimes. You need someone that has gone through that process to walk with you. When you are feeling low and when you have that temptation and your partners are calling you, you need someone on the pro-social side that you can pick up the phone and you can look at for support. That's where we start to make the change.

So my agency has been successful, but a lot of that has to do with the good graces that this committee and others have given us the resources to dig in to find out what it is that we actually need to do, and the men and women who work with the offenders day in and day out in some of that community support, some of which is represented here in the audience today.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you very much.

I just want to say, Mr. Chairman, the notion of—I think the chairman has been clear, you know; no one is going to throw some money out of there in front of you. Frankly, I don't think they should.

I would look at CSOSA and what has worked there. It can't be done on the cheap. We didn't do it on the cheap when we put them in jail for $30,000 a year, bringing them out here in the same condition. And therefore we've got to decide if you have a limited amount of dollars, where to use them. And these record numbers are in prison because of drugs, then it does seem to me to make sense to somehow extricate that one part of the problem, because it is such a large part of the problem.

I just want to say, finally, to Ms. Hogan, I am very impressed to read your testimony and to hear your testimony, because you are the story of virtually every woman in prison. And here was a woman who was saying get me off these drugs and I will be all right. She went to prison and could not—she couldn't get them beforehand. And we are getting to the point where it is easier to get them after you come out than beforehand. She couldn't get any effective drug treatment beforehand. The last place apparently you can get it at least is in State prisons, and then she was on her way back out until she found somebody who would help her after she got out of prison.

So I just want to thank all of you for what you are doing.

And I do think, Mr. Quander, that you could be helpful to the States, because it's really a State problem. Most people are in State prison. If somehow what has happened here, which is kind of a microcosm that is normally not available to localities, should be shared so that they would have some sense where to put their own limited dollars while we are trying to get more dollars here, and I think that your experience is very useful to us all.

And I am very grateful for what the Federal Government, the Federal prison system and the Federal dollars that fund CSOSA have done for the returning of felons in the District of Columbia.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

Mr. Davis.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me thank each one of the witnesses for their testimony.

Listening to all of the things that we continued to hear, my question really goes to Mr. Russell and to Ms. Hogan. Could you project what your life might be like if you had not come into contact with some help? I am saying we often look at the statistic that 67 percent of the individuals would probably reoffend within the 3-year period if they didn't find some kind of help.

So would you just project what you think your life might be like if you had not come in contact with some help?

Ms. HOGAN. Yes. I could basically say that if I hadn't gotten the help from a social worker, that, you know, my children were in Child Protective Services, I can predict pretty much if I had kept using and going in and out of jail that my children would be gone. And because addiction is a disease, once—you know, if it's left untreated, you get fatal results.

So I don't think I would be here today if I was still using and going in and out of jail. And I am thankful that I had someone that took interest in me to help me.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. Thank you.

Mr. Russell.

Mr. RUSSELL. I can honestly say that I wouldn't be sitting here today either if it weren't for the InnerChange Freedom Initiative Ministry. You have volunteers coming in and sharing their lives with you, and not knowing you from Adam, and giving you an opportunity to open yourself up to them, knowing that they care about you.

You have someone walking beside you and not looking down on you. You have someone giving you the tools and the instructions so that you could have a structured life as well.

Being with Jim has been a blessing to me, because if he wouldn't have been around, I would have gone back to the same old ways. I would have been back to the old same community I came out of. But having an opportunity to move out of that community into a new community, into a new environment, opened my eyes to where now I want to help, I want to give back.

So, having those volunteers there, having the mentors there, having the program in place has opened my eyes a lot more clearly than they had been before—not changed, not rehabilitated me, but transforming me from that old man to the new man.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. Mr. Mata, Mr. Quander, both of you are professionals in the field, in the business. As you do the work that you do on a regular basis, what do you think can really put the seal on and become a real breakthrough?

We know that there are many individual programs throughout the country, but they are oftentimes so meager, so minor, so small, and we are missing so many people who never come into contact with the program, who never get touched.

What becomes a real breakthrough for this problem across the Nation?

Mr. QUANDER. I will try to respond this way. I think you actually need a movement, you need a concerted effort whereby the focus of reentry and prisoners actually takes on the character of the movement so that everyone is aware of the issues and everyone is focused on what some of the solutions are.

Some of the solutions are pretty straightforward. We mentioned drug treatment, we have mentioned housing, we have mentioned employment. There are certain areas in which certain programs are very successful. We need to concentrate on those areas. I think if we concentrate on those areas, we can produce the results, and once we produce the results, you can't argue with the numbers. I think that is where we need to go and that is where we need to concentrate.

For offenders in the District of Columbia, housing is such a big issue. They will tell you, I can't concentrate on my substance abuse issues if I don't have a place to live. I want to get back with my family. I want to go to the PTA meetings, but I need to establish myself as a man and provide for my family, and I am going to do it either by hustling or I am going to do it the correct way.

So those are those real issues that we really need to focus on. Some of the faith-based partners that we have done it with, they have apartment buildings, and they are willing to convert those and are doing that right now. We need to support those efforts, because they have already taken the lead. We need to support it.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. Mr. Mata.

Mr. MATA. Mr. Davis, I agree with what Mr. Quander just said, but I also want to make a differentiation between the city and the State. I actually have two positions. I work for the city of Baltimore, but I also work for the State of Maryland as the executive director for the Governor's Advisory Council on Offender Employment.

The city and the State are two very different monsters. The city is sort of an urban island, and then you have the State of Maryland, which is western, eastern, southern Maryland that thinks very differently from what the city of Baltimore does. So it does take a movement in order to make these changes happen.

There are some great things coming out of the Federal Government that we could use in the State, but our State representatives sometimes vote against things that can help reentry in the State of Maryland.

The movement has started in Maryland. Like I said, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, they have both started reentry activities there. If you look at a county such as Montgomery County, which is a very wealthy county in the State of Maryland, they actually are having some problems with reentry because when they connect their inmates to employment after they are released, they may get a job offer from that business, but then all of a sudden they don't show up to the job anymore because after release the Division of Corrections no longer has ahold of them, they can no longer assist them in making that proper transition. So they are back out into the free world, but they don't have the cognitive restructuring or the mental capacity to deal with everyday living like you and I do.

This is something else that needs to be brought in and taught to these inmates and ex-offenders, and programs such as CSOSA, programs like the REP program in Baltimore City, these programs are doing great jobs in assisting these ex-offenders in returning into the community.

Mr. DAVIS OF ILLINOIS. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SOUDER. What Mr. Mata just said is not widely talked about, yet is a huge problem of the longer term followup if you haven't had a substantive change. Because often as I have dealt with the businessmen who are first willing to hire many of the people going back into the community, they are themselves the most outspoken leaders in the community trying to get other business leaders to do that. And then if it doesn't work and they are running a business that runs on a profit, and if the people don't show up, they give up and it affects the entire business community.

We have a stake in making these programs go, to make sure that there is some kind of followup in that employment, for literally it isn't that it just fails in one case, it spreads to the employers, to other employers, and by word of mouth just goes through the busi-

ness community that this is too high a risk, because you are already taking some risk in the situation.

Before moving to the next panel, I wanted to raise one other question that challenged me years ago, and I know it is going to come up in the course of this debate.

Years ago, when I was a staffer for the House, a man named Bob Woodson told me, when I went to talk to him, he said, "Don't be a typical White guy who sits on your duff and pronounces what is wrong with the urban centers. Go out and meet some people."

So I said, "OK, introduce me to some." One of the men I met was V.G. Ginnis, who over 20 years ago was working with gang problems with the Bloods and the Crips in the city of Los Angeles. We had done a number of antigang initiatives to provide job training, housing assistance, counseling, drug treatment to people and gangs. And he said, "Here is the problem with some of what you do." Guess what that program did? More kids joined gangs because they couldn't get job training, drug treatment, housing assistance if they didn't belong to the gang, so gang membership went up.

When these services don't exist in the community for people who are following the law, how do we best make the argument—other than a pure cost question here, which you can, but it doesn't get into the equity question—how do we make this argument to sell a bill like this, when there is a shortage of services across the board?

Mr. MATA. If I could just answer that, Mr. Chairman, with the reentry center that we are trying to start in Baltimore, that is actually one of the issues that we are looking at, because if we put it in the northwest corridor, we are actually replacing a center that assists all the population in that northwest area of Baltimore City. But what we are looking at is that it will be open to all Baltimore City residents, but with specialists who focus on ex-offender issues.

The reason why you need that there is because those specialists, they have the contacts who know what works specifically for ex-offenders.

Going back to the business aspect, you don't only want to put an ex-offender into a job, you want to put them into a career pathway, and you want to do that for any resident. Because the older you get or the more experienced you get, you want to move up the career ladder, you want to be a better taxpaying citizen and you want to help others do the same thing. Those specialists that would be at that center would be able to do that and better assist that population.

Mr. MCNEIL. Mr. Chairman, I would like to share something with you. In Texas, after an offender has been out 2 years and he can get permission from his parole officer, from the unit, they can come back to that unit and be a volunteer in services.

David has just gone through the Texas Department of Corrections, or TDCJ, security and safety training, and he is becoming a mentor himself. We have several of our fellows who are back in mentoring, and we find that they are the best mentors. But we also find that it is real good for them. You can't keep it if you don't give it away.

They really can work with the guys with their problems. They understand them, they have been there. And we have fellows that are really wanting to come back and work as volunteers.

Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Quander.

Mr. QUANDER. Sometimes I believe we just have to take small steps. For certain individuals that are returning from periods of incarceration, they have never held any type of job. So the first step sometimes is just getting into a job, learning those soft skills: How do you work with others? How do you resolve disputes? How do you talk to people? It may not be a career that a person is looking for, but it is a start.

There are jobs out here in our communities that we can get people started. Sometimes, you know, a long journey begins with that first step. So sometimes the first job, the first positive experience that we can provide to men and women who are returning can help them, along with other support, to make the next steps in their lives.

So a job is a job when you have that support, and it can be more than just that first job, it can be the first step. That is the approach we have to take, because I know across the country, there are limitations. But for individuals who are just returning from prison that first step can be so important and meaningful.

Mr. SOUDER. I thank you each for your testimony. If you want to submit anything else into the record, if you hear anything on the third panel or you have additional thoughts, please get it to us in the next 5 legislative days, and thank you for your patience.

If the third panel could now come forward: Pat Nolan, Joseph Williams, Chaplain Robert Toney, Frederick Davie and George Williams.

If you could each remain standing, I need to swear you in.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. SOUDER. Let the record show each of the witnesses responded in the affirmative.

The first witness on this panel—and thank you very much for your patience; it has been a long afternoon—is Pat Nolan from Prison Fellowship, from Justice Fellowship. Pat and I have known each other longer than we want to admit. It is great to see you here today, and thank you for your leadership in this area.

STATEMENTS OF PAT NOLAN, PRISON FELLOWSHIP; JOSEPH WILLIAMS, TRANSITION OF PRISONERS; CHAPLAIN ROBERT TONEY, ANGOLA PRISON, LOUISIANA; FREDERICK A. DAVIE, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF PUBLIC POLICY, PUBLIC/PRIVATE VENTURES; AND GEORGE A.H. WILLIAMS, TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES

STATEMENT OF PAT NOLAN

Mr. NOLAN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and distinguished Members. It really is an honor to be here with you and discuss with you this very important issue of public safety.

We are working to prepare prisoners to return to their community, and we want them to do it safely and successfully so they can become productive, law-abiding, contributing members of the community.

Mr. Chairman, as you noted, I am the president of Justice Fellowship, which is the criminal justice reform arm of Prison Fellow-

ship Ministries. Prison Fellowship for three decades now has worked to change prisoners' lives by taking the gospel into prisons; and part of that is, we can't take the gospel into prisons if we also don't care about the circumstances in which they live and to which they return and the circumstances that got them there. So we work at dealing with the prisoner in all of those circumstances from a biblical basis.

Scientific studies have shown that inmates who participate in just 10 or more of our Bible studies are two-thirds less likely to recidivate. And that is significant because, for many of us, Joe and others, who have been incarcerated—I knocked off 10 Bible studies in about 2 weeks. For those who are interested, there are plenty of opportunities to do it. So just 10 or more having that impact is very significant.

I wrote a book, "When Prisoners Return," to call the church to become involved in preparing prisoners for their return and then helping them after they return. It is based on our experience as a ministry and my own personal experiences.

I bring a unique background to the ministry. I was for 15 years a member of the California State Assembly. I was Republican leader of the Assembly for 4 of those years. I was a leader on crime issues.

I was one of the original sponsors of the Victims' Bill of Rights, Proposition 15. I was the author of the Death Penalty Restoration Act and author of tough-on-crime measures, including mandatory minimum sentences.

I pushed for the expansion of California's prison system as the floor leader at a time when we built nine new prisons and not one new university.

Then I was targeted for prosecution over a campaign contribution that turned out to be part of an FBI sting operation. I pleaded guilty to one count of racketeering and went to prison for 25 months and spent another 4 months in a halfway house.

I had a chance to see the impact of the policies that I had so ardently advocated played out, and I saw how our system is failing us. I saw that the prisons were not making the community safer, that the atmosphere inside a prison was not conducive toward reformation of character, and in fact the skills you learn to survive inside prison make you antisocial when you get out.

And while in good faith I had supported all those policies, in fact they weren't keeping the public safer; they were making the public more dangerous. Even low-risk or nonviolent offenders that go to prison are more likely to commit offenses when they get out. The RAND Corp. studies have shown that.

While I was in prison, I had plenty of time to think about why that was, why those policies that I had strongly supported weren't working. My testimony today reflects the conclusions that I came to and that we have learned from our experience in trying to minister to people.

First, let me tell you what it is like to be released from prison. The moment you get off the bus, you are faced with several critical decisions immediately: Where will you live? Where are you going to find your next meal? Where will you look for a job? How do you

get to the job interview? How do you get to where you hope to live? How can you earn enough money to support yourself?

There are a million business details: How do you open a bank account? How do you get an I.D. card? Most people are released from prison without even identification, and these days, after September 11, you can't get a hotel room, you can't get on a train, you can't get on a plane, without I.D. What are you going to do?

How do you make medical appointments? Inside prison you are exposed to staph infections, hepatitis C, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS. How do you get a medical appointment? And how do you have a doctor treat you when you don't have any of your records with you?

These things put a lot of stress on an inmate coming out. And the problem is, the pressure of these decisions hits you at a point when you have been stripped for years of any control over any aspect of your life. You are desensitized to making decisions.

I will give you a perfect example. When I came out, a bunch of my friends—it was the first day at the halfway house. A bunch of my friends took me to lunch at the 8th Street Deli, right near the Capitol. We all sat there. The waiter came and they went around and ordered. And I sat there and stared at the menu. And I looked at it—you know, on a deli menu there are hundreds of choices. I stared and was paralyzed; I couldn't make a choice. For 2 years I hadn't ordered anything for myself. I hadn't decided what to eat. And here I was.

Finally, in embarrassment, I just ordered where my eyes hit, but I didn't want it. I was just too embarrassed. I just wanted to get that moment over with.

I come from a good background. I had a great education. I was an attorney. I was a member of the legislature. If, after just 2 years of incarceration, I couldn't order something from a menu, think of a person that didn't have any of those advantages going into prison, and they confront where to live, where to sleep, how to get a job, what to do with their time. It is a significant problem.

The first thing I want to say to you, mentors make all the difference in the world. It is not programs that are as important as relationships. Programs are important, but only if they facilitate a relationship, or the real live human being that loves you.

By the very statement of being a mentor, it is an act of love. Just being there for the inmates is a powerful statement. That somebody like Jim McNeil would come every week and visit David Russell in prison and then walk through the gate with him and help him, to be there as he confronted all those decisions, is an act of love. Government programs can't love people, only people can.

The second thing I want to say is where are those loving people going to come from? Ninety-five-plus percent of them come from churches. We can use euphemistic terms such as "community-based," but it is churches that provide these people. Willie Sutton was asked, "Why do you rob banks?" He said, "That is where the money is."

If we are interested in finding loving people to start these relationships with inmates, it is the churches where they are going to come from, and that is just the reality. We can play all around that, but going and speaking to a Kiwanis Club, you are not going to have nearly the impact as you do going to a church, saying, "Will

you come and join us in walking with these men and women and helping prepare them for their return and then walk through the gate with them as they make those decisions?"

The church is also a healthy atmosphere. John Dilulio made a very interesting observation: "The last two institutions to leave the inner-city are liquor stores and the churches." Think of the clusters of ill health, of pathology, around liquor stores, the gambling, the vice, the drugs, versus the clusters of health, healthy lives, around churches.

We want the people coming out of prisons to be healthy, not just physically—mentally, morally—healthy, good people. Churches are the place. If they are going to hang, if they are going to spend time, the church is a lot healthier place for them to hang out than the liquor store. So we need to facilitate that. We need to encourage that.

But it is uncomfortable coming out of prison. You are not sure if anybody will welcome you. The mentor helps them. They introduce them to the church, they hopefully will have told them ahead of time, this inmate is coming out that they have that relationship with, introduce them to the church and get them involved in healthy activities.

Not just Bible studies and worship services, but also just helping around the church. Our parents told us that idle hands are the devil's playground. There is plenty of idle time when you get out of prison. You go from a period of control to a period of total freedom with your time. It is better to channel that to where healthy, loving people are in the churches.

The last point I will make is that the government has to treat the faith community as a partner. Too many government agencies treat it as an auxiliary that it is a cheap way to do what we don't have enough money to do. That is wrong, because it misses the power that the church has.

The church provides something that government never can, and that is not only that love, but it is also that moral outlook and direction. We don't want the government preaching and giving moral direction. But crime at its root is a moral problem. Bad moral choices were made. The decision was made to harm somebody else. And we need to reform that attitude, that world view, that helps get that person thinking right, thinking in terms of living a good, healthy, productive life. The only way that comes is from a world view.

We don't have enough cops in the world to stop people from doing something bad that pops in their head. There has to be self-restraint, and it is the church that can teach that self-restraint, and the loving mentor that can help model that behavior and help them when they stumble and make mistakes to get back on their feet.

The last thing I will say is that Dr. Martin Luther King said, "To change someone, you must first love them, and they must know that you love them." It is the faith-based community that reaches out in love to people society would rather forget and says, "We love

you, we will walk with you, we are here to help you get back on your feet."

Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Nolan follows:]

Testimony of Pat Nolan
President, Justice Fellowship

Before the Committee on Government Reform

Hearing On Prisoner Reentry

February 3, 2005

Mr. Chairman and Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before your subcommittee on the very important subject of increasing public safety by doing a better job of preparing prisoners to return to their communities.

I am the President of Justice Fellowship, the criminal justice reform arm Prison Fellowship. We work with government officials to apply biblical principles of justice to our criminal justice system.

We are grateful for today's hearing so that we can give our perspective on what works in transforming the lives of offenders so that they can return to their communities to lead healthy, productive, law abiding lives after their incarceration. Prison Fellowship's perspective is based on three decades of sharing the life-changing message of the Gospel in prisons. Our staff and volunteers lead Bible Studies and provide discipleship training in prisons across the United States. Scientific studies have shown that inmates who participate in just ten or more of these Bible Studies and seminars are two-thirds less likely to recidivate. Prison Fellowship also ministers to the children of prisoners through our Angel Tree project. I am the author of When Prisoners Return a book that calls the Church to work with inmates as they prepare for release and to "walk through the gate" with them as they take those difficult first steps of freedom.

I bring a unique background to our ministry. Prior to becoming President of Justice Fellowship, I served for 15 years in the California State Assembly, four of those as the Assembly Republican Leader. I was a leader on crime issues, particularly on behalf of victims' rights. I was one of the original sponsors of the Victims' Bill of Rights (Proposition 15) and was awarded the "Victims Advocate Award" by Parents of Murdered Children. I pushed to expand California's prison system and led the fight to restore the death penalty and make it harder for convicts to be paroled.

Then, I was targeted for prosecution for a campaign contribution I received, which turned out to be part of an FBI sting. I pleaded guilty to one count of racketeering, and served 25 months in a federal prison and four months in a halfway house. What I saw in prison caused me to reexamine the policies that I had so ardently advocated, and my testimony today reflects my experiences both as legislator and as prisoner.

To understand the immensity of the crisis in our criminal justice system, a few facts are in order. One out of every 134 Americans is behind bars today - over two million people. That is the highest incarceration rate and largest prison population in the world. (Triple the rate of just 20 years ago). In addition another 4.6 million Americans are on probation or parole, meaning that one in every 32 adults is either in custody or on supervised release.

With less than 5 percent of the globe's people, America locks up 25 percent of the world's prisoners at an annual cost exceeding $40 billion. Government at all levels spent $147 billion on crime related expenses: police protection, corrections, and judicial and legal activities in 1999.

Each prison cell costs $100,000 to build, plus we spend at least $20,000 annually to house feed and guard each inmate . Prisons have become one of the fastest growing items in state budgets, siphoning off dollars that that might otherwise be available for schools, roads or hospitals.

Offenders are often sentenced for years to overcrowded prisons where they are exposed to the horrors of violence including homosexual rape, isolation from family and friends, and despair. Instead of working on the outside to repay their victims and support their families, many non-dangerous offenders are idle in prison; warehoused with little preparation to make better choices when they return to the free world. On leaving prison they will have great difficulty finding employment. The odds are great that their first incarceration will not be their last.

Our large investment in our prisons might be justified if the inmates released from them were reformed in hearts as well as habits. However, most inmates do not leave prison transformed into law-abiding citizens. In fact, the very skills inmates develop to survive inside prison make them anti-social when they are released. Prisons are, indeed, graduate schools of crime.

The statistics tell the story. A recent study by the Department of Justice Statistics found that two out of three released inmates were rearrested within three years , victimizing more innocents in the process.

Over the last thirty years, the rate of rearrest has hovered stubbornly around 67 percent as both the liberals and then conservatives tried their solutions. Both approaches have failed to break the cycle of crime. Whether the therapeutic model or the tough-on-crime philosophy was guiding crime policy, the results have remained the same: more crime, more victims and more prisons. If two-thirds of the patients leaving a hospital had to be readmitted soon thereafter, the public would quickly find a new place to be treated.

The moment offenders step off the bus they face several critical decisions: where will they live, where will they be able to find a meal, where should they look for a job, how will they get from one place to the next and where can they earn the enough money to pay for these necessities? These returning inmates are also confronted with many details

of personal business, such as obtaining various identification cards and documents, making medical appointments, and working through the many everyday bureaucratic problems that occur during any transition. These choices prompt feelings of intense stress and worry over the logistical aspects of their return to the outside world. To someone who has had no control over any aspect of their lives for many years, each of these problems can be vexing. In accumulation, they can be overwhelming.

My own experience provides a good example. Shortly after my release to the halfway house, some friends took me to lunch at a local deli. The waiter came over to take our orders. Everyone else told him what they wanted, but I kept poring over the menu. My eyes raced over the columns of choices. I knew that I was supposed to order, but the number of options overwhelmed me. My friends sat in embarrassed silence. I was paralyzed. The waiter looked at me impatiently. I began to panic. How ridiculous that I wasn't able to do such a simple thing as order lunch. Finally, in desperation I ordered the next item my eyes landed on. I didn't even want it, but at least it put an end to this embarrassing incident.

For two years I hadn't been allowed to make any choices about what I ate. Now I was having a hard time adjusting to the simple options most people face every day. If I had this much difficulty after only a couple of years in prison, think how hard it is for those inmates who haven't made any choices for five, ten or fifteen years. When they are dropped off at the station or the airport with a ticket and a few dollars in spending money, how will they cope with the baffling array of options they face? Have been prepared for the world of free choices? Is it any surprise that so many of them make some bad choices and end up back in prison?

The choices they make immediately after release are extremely important. Of the ex-prisoners who fail (that is, are rearrested) over half will fail within the first six months. That is not much time to turn their lives around. One study of re-arrests in New York City found that the rate was especially high during the first hours and days following release. This early window of time is the most intense period for ex-prisoners, when they may be overwhelmed by the accumulation of large and small decisions facing them. On average, ex-offenders have only a one-in-three chance of getting through their first years without being arrested.

After their release, former inmates often need help reentering society: hunting for an apartment, securing furnishings or clothes, making new friends, obtaining medical care and entering a faith community. They also need good advice on family relationships, help finding a job and encouragement as they face many disappointments. In short, they need someone who cares about them and looks out for their best interest. As I wrote in the first chapter, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "To change someone, you must first love them and they must know that you love them."

During their difficult first days on the street these returning prisoners need relationships with loving, moral adults. Programs are helpful, but a program cannot love these former

inmates; only people can do that. And where do the vast majority of these people come from? Over 95% come from churches.

A welcoming church is a crucial element for returning prisoners who have become Christians in prison. Their new life means avoiding many of their old friends and sometimes even shunning family members with alcohol or drug dependence. Where will these newly minted Christians turn for companionship and positive activities if they have been rejected by their local church? The greater the density of loving, moral people we can pack around returning prisoners, the greater the chance that they will become healthy, productive, law-abiding members of the community.

One former addict said that quitting drugs was much easier than dropping his old friends when he got out. We all seek to belong, and if the church doesn't welcome these returning inmates, they will seek fellowship elsewhere. The church offers a positive alternative to street life for ex-offenders. Dr. John DiIulio, who was President Bush's first Director of the Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives, pointed out the stark dividing lines of urban life, "The last two institutions to leave the inner city are liquor stores and the church." If inmates feel welcome in a church, their old lives probably won't seem so attractive.

The church can be an oasis of tranquility to released inmates in an otherwise pretty hostile world. After years of having every minute of their lives controlled by prison authorities, offenders return to find themselves with unending hours of unstructured time to contend with. Unless they are quickly drawn into positive activities, the temptation is to "hang" on the street corner or watch TV for hours at a time. Boredom and loneliness are twin curses that will likely lead them into bad situations.

Church activities offer a positive way to fill this time. Worship services, Bible studies and church social activities are wholesome activities that put the returning offenders into a "good crowd", and provide them with positive role models.

In addition to group activities with the church, it is important that returning inmates have a friend they can turn to as they take their difficult first steps in freedom. A loving mentor is key to helping them think through their decisions and hold them accountable for making the right moral choices.

The importance of mentors to returning prisoners was stressed by Dr. Byron Johnson in his recent study of the InnerChange Freedom Initiative (IFI), a reentry program operated by Prison Fellowship under contract with the state of Texas. Dr. Johnson's study found that IFI graduates were two-and-a-half times less likely to be re-incarcerated. The two year post-release reincarceration rate among IFI graduates in Texas was 8 percent, compared with 20.3 percent of the matched comparison group.

Dr. Johnson emphasized that mentors were "absolutely critical" to the impressive results. The support and accountability provided by mentors often make the difference between a successful return to society and re-offending. As these offenders make the difficult

transition back into the community, they need relationships with caring, moral adults. The greater the density of good people we pack around them, the greater the chance that they will be successfully replanted back into the community.

A mentor can help the ex-offender think through employment options and tell them what their employer will expect of them on the job. Many offenders have never had someone in their lives who has held a steady job. They have no model for being a good employee. A mentor can teach them that they need to get up on time, go to work each day, and call their supervisor if they must be late or absent. The offender may find it difficult to take direction or may lack skills to cope with a difficult boss or fellow employees. A mentor can help them with these and other everyday difficulties of the workplace and teach them the importance of punctuality, politeness, and diplomacy on the job.

Mentors can also help the offenders learn decision-making skills and teach them how to keep track of bills and pay them on time. In prison inmates do not have to deal with any of this. On the street such details may quickly overwhelm them. In short, offenders need to be taught how to make good choices, handle responsibility, and be accountable—to make the right choice even when no one is looking.

Mentors also help returning inmates deal with many of the personal problems they typically encounter upon leaving prison: no reliable friends outside their former gang network, marital problems and no easy way to get on with life. While mentors provide a much-needed emotional safety net for returning felons, they should not taken in by "poor me" stories. As one mentor said, "When a guy tells me his boss is mean or that his sister is going to kick him out of her house if he doesn't get a job, I tell him to deal with it. I point out that he has made a lot of mistakes and that he's going to have to do whatever it takes to change his life."

Some practical ways a mentor can help ex-offenders:

- Assist them in developing a "life plan".
- Identify their strengths and weaknesses, skills and abilities so that they can find employment that is tailored to those qualities.
- Coach them in job interview skills.
- Help them write their resume and fill out job applications.
- Provide them with a ride or a bus pass to get to job interviews and job searches.
- When they locate a job, introduce yourself to their supervisor and offer to help when issues arise.
- Introduce them to your congregation and include them in your worship services, Bible studies and other activities and support services.
- Help them develop independent living skills, such as budgeting or shopping.
- Help them deal with difficulties with family and loved ones.
- Meet their parole or probation officer, and make sure they keep their appointments. Let the supervising authorities know you are available to help as issues arise.
- Drive them to parole or probation appointments, if necessary.

- Accompany them to medical and social service appointments to help them tolerate delays in waiting rooms and other challenges.
- Be available to help when temptation arises.

Ideally, the relationship between mentors and offenders should begin while they are still in prison. That way, they can establish rapport and think through the options for life after prison prior to their release. For prisoners who are in institutions too far away to visit them often, some institutions offer teleconferencing. Or, if necessary, the relationship can be established through phone calls and letters.

It is helpful to meet ex-offenders at the gate or bus station, and to keep company with them during their first critical hours after release. A mentor provides stability and companionship at a time of acute vulnerability. It can also cement the relationship between mentor and ex-prisoners at a time when it is very important to establish trust.

Obviously a good job is essential if these men and women are to make a successful transition from prison back to the community. Work is important for more than just the paycheck, although the fact that someone values an offender's talents enough to pay them for their labor is a great morale boost. In addition, work puts them into daily contact with the mainstream of the community, forming positive relationships with "everyday" people.

On the other hand, being unemployed with time on their hands can often lead inmates into trouble. Our mothers wisely taught us that idle hands are the devil's playground. This is nowhere more true than for returning inmates. Watching TV or hanging out with others in the neighborhood is a recipe for a return to the wrong lifestyle.

However, when a returning offender secures a job, will they be able to keep it? They need help thinking though employment options and learning what is expected of them on the job. Many offenders have never had someone in their lives who has held a steady job. They have had no model for being a good employee. A mentor can teach them that they need to get up on time, go to work each day and call their supervisor if they must be absent. The offender may find it difficult to take direction, or they may lack skills to cope with a difficult boss or fellow employees. Their mentor can help them with such everyday difficulties of the workplace and teach them the importance of punctuality, politeness, and diplomacy on the job.

The mentor can also help the offender with decision making, how to keep track of bills and pay them on time. In prison inmates don't have to deal with any of this, and on the street such details may quickly overwhelm them. In short, offenders need to be taught how to make good choices, handle responsibility, and be accountable; to make the right choice even when no one is looking.

Of course, for a mentor to make a difference, the offender's attitudes must be changed. Crime is at its root a moral as well as a legal problem. The inmate is in prison as a result

of bad moral choices, and their hearts must be transformed if they are to lead crime-free lives.

The world has largely given up on changing the behavior of offenders. The Church, on the other hand, believes in redemption. The Church reaches out in love, embracing the offender while asking him to repent of his sin. The Church also knows that it is important to hold offenders accountable for the harm they have done and that they must attempt to make things right with their victims; and, most importantly, to turn their lives over to God.

There is a tendency for government agencies to view churches and faith-based organizations as "money-saving" devices - a cheap way to accomplish tasks in times of budget restraint. In this construct, the faith community is merely an auxiliary force to be drawn upon to do what government would otherwise do.

I submit to you that this view is terribly flawed. The faith community offers something that government programs cannot provide: love. To many inmates, the mentor from the local church may be the first person to ever tell them that they are loved, and may be the first to hold them accountable for their actions. Effective reentry programs view the faith community as an essential partner. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "To change someone, you must first love them and they must know that you love them." It is the church that can provide that all-important love.

Mr. SOUDER. Our next witness is Mr. Joseph Williams, Transition of Prisoners.

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH WILLIAMS

Mr. JOSEPH WILLIAMS. Thank you, and good evening.

First, let me start by saying what an honor it is for me to be able to testify before this committee on an issue that is very near and dear to my heart, prison aftercare and prison reentry and the reduction of prison recidivism.

If we are going to have a significant impact on this whole problem of prisoner recidivism, I think it is very important for us to first understand the types of people who populate our prisons, and if you would allow me to read just a few prisoner demographics.

First of all, 50 percent were raised by a single parent, usually the mother; 15 percent were raised by neither parent, but were raised by another relative or in a foster care home or in an institution; 25 percent were raised by a parent or a guardian who was a substance abuser; 15 percent of male inmates and 55 percent of female inmates were physically or sexually abused as children, and the numbers are even higher for those raised in foster care homes or institutions—44 percent for men and 87 percent for women; 95 percent of the men had no loving father figure in their life.

As far as educational achievement is concerned, 40 percent did not have a high school diploma or its equivalent; 40 to 65 percent are functionally illiterate, meaning they lack the skills necessary to read and understand a newspaper, balance a checkbook or fill out an application for a job—on the average, they read at a 7th grade level; 25 to 50 percent have symptoms of a learning disability; on the average, their IQ score is 14 points below the national average, and about 15 percent score low enough on an IQ test to be identified as mentally retarded.

As far as substance abuse is concerned, alcohol and other drugs are implicated in the offenses of about 80 percent of inmates. Drug offenses account for 20 to 60 percent of inmates; 60 to 80 percent have used drugs at some point in their lives; 70 to 85 percent of inmates need some level of drug treatment, but only 13 percent receive treatment while in prison.

Then there are the effects of prison after a person ends up in the prison for a number of years. They have a prison mentality: Don't talk, don't trust, don't feel. They are indecisive, distrustful, afraid of life beyond the walls. They are out of touch—out of touch with family, out of touch with society in general, and out of touch with the requirements of today's workplace.

I think when we look at the characteristics of these individuals who are in prison and are being released into the community, we can see that this is not going to be a quick-fix solution, that in order to have a significant impact on the problem of prison recidivism, comprehensive and relatively long-term measures are going to be required.

I can say that, like Pat, I feel that I am uniquely qualified to speak to this issue. First of all, I am a former inmate. I am a former career criminal and former drug addict. For 13 years, between the ages of 15 and 28, I lived as a drug addict and a drug dealer.

When I was 28 years old, God miraculously delivered me from heroin addiction and from a life of crime, and within a year after my deliverance and my transition from a life of crime to a life of being productive in the community, I began to go back into the jails and the prisons and help others who were in the same situation that God had brought me out of. But I was not involved in jail and prison ministry very long before I realized that most of the people that I was ministering to in the jails and the prison, once they were released from prison, were back in prison within a short period of time.

For 23 years now, I have worked in some form of ministry to prisoners, ex-prisoners and their families.

I was also blessed to be able to go back to school, and I received a bachelor's degree in religious education with a double major in urban studies and Bible; and I was also able to attend Wayne State and to achieve a master of arts degree in applied sociology.

While I was at Wayne State, I discovered the theory of social integration. Basically what the theory of social integration says is that those who have strong attachments to positive social institutions, such as the church, family and work, are far less likely to engage in antisocial behaviors.

I was employed by Prison Fellowship in 1992 and started the Detroit Transition of Prisoners program in 1993. We used the theory of social integration as a basis for our program model. The way that we achieve social integration is through the churches. We have about 80 churches working with us in Detroit, and they provide 120 mentors who work with men and women who transition from prison back into the community.

It has been referenced today during these hearings, but I want to put more emphasis on it, that most of those, like I was—those people who were in prison and coming out of prison—have strong attachments to antisocial networks, and in order for them to be successful, then we have to facilitate their integration into pro-social networks.

A person can go through the finest program. We know that drug treatment and housing and job placement and education and all of those things are very much needed. But unless we are able to facilitate their connection to pro-social support networks, they are very likely to go back to old friends and associates, as Mr. Cummings alluded to; and it is only a matter of time before they end up back using drugs, back committing crime and back in prison.

We have collected quite a bit of data on our program since the time that we started. We have been in existence now for about 12 years. Our program evaluator is Leon Wilson, who is the Chair of Sociology and Criminal Justice at Wayne State University, and he conducted a study in 2000. He found that only 18 percent of those who graduated from a TOP program had any further contact with the criminal justice system within 3 years, and of that 18 percent, only one person went back to prison for the commission of a new crime.

I want to say that I wholeheartedly support the idea of faith-based and community-based organizations working hand in hand with the government to impact this problem, and our data and my

experience suggest that when we in the church and in the community work hand in hand with the government, we can have a significant impact on the problem of recidivism.

Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Joseph Williams follows:]

Joseph Williams
CEO of Transition of Prisoners, Inc.

Testimony on Prison Recidivism

When considering the issue of prison recidivism, it is critical to understand the characteristics of those we seek to help to avoid having the experience of being sent back to prison. Only then can we hope to build effective interventions that will help them through the difficult transition from prison to productive life in the community. Consider the following prisoner related demographics:

Family Background

- 50% were raised by a single parent, usually the mother
- 15% were raised by neither parent but were raised by another relative, in a foster home, or in an institution
- 25% were raised by a parent or guardian who was a substance abuser
- 15% of male inmates and 55% of female inmates were physically or sexually abused as children, and the numbers are even higher for those raised in foster homes or institutions---44% of men and 87% of women
- 95% of the men had no loving father figure

Educational Achievement

- 40% do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent
- 40% - 65% are functionally illiterate, meaning, they lack the skills necessary to read and understand a newspaper, balance a checkbook, or fill out an application for a job
- On average they read at the seventh-grade level
- 25-50% have symptoms of a learning disability
- On average their IQ score is 14 points below the national average, and about 15% score low enough on IQ test to be identified as mentally retarded.

Substance Abuse History

- Alcohol and/or other drugs are implicated in the offenses of about 80% of inmates
- Drug offenses account for 20 – 60% of inmates
- 60 – 80% have used drugs at some point in their lives
- 70 – 85% of inmates need some level of drug treatment, but only 13% receive treatment

Effects of Prison

- They have a prison mentality (Don't talk. Don't trust. Don't feel)
    - Indecisive
    - Distrustful
    - Afraid of life beyond the walls

- They are out of touch
    - Out of touch with family
    - Out of touch with society in general
    - Out of touch with the requirements of today's workplace

When the above demographics are taken into consideration, we can easily see why so many men and women ended up in prison in the first place. We can see why they are so ill prepared to enter society once they are released from prison. We should also be able to see that if we are to make a significant impact in the daunting social problem of prison recidivism that significant resources will need to be made available. The national recidivism rate will not likely be reduced by any kind of quick fix solution. More interventions in prison and in the community are needed to build the capacity of these men and women, enabling them to assume a more productive role in society.

My personal and professional journey of helping former inmates successfully re-integrate into the community began in 1982. About one year earlier God had miraculously delivered me from a life of crime and drug addiction. For thirteen years between the ages of fifteen and twenty-eight, I lived as a career criminal and hardcore drug addict, heroine being my drug of choice. I was very grateful to God for having successfully made the transition from a life of crime and addiction to that of a productive member of my community of Detroit, Michigan. I could not, however, forget about the men and women who, I knew, were still trapped in that miserable existence. I desperately wanted to do something to help them experience a better, more productive life, like the one I was enjoying.

I began by volunteering at the Wayne County Jail in downtown Detroit through my church. The ministry in which I was engaged at the jail was very fulfilling. Scores of men and women expressed their desire to live better lives. Those who acknowledged God in their life appeared to have newfound aspirations and goals for their lives. They planned to avoid drugs and crime when they were released from jail. They aspired to live as contributing members of society. Over the next several years, many of those with whom I had worked with in the jail and in the prisons were released back into the community. It greatly distressed me to see every one of them, to a person, return to old friends, drugs, crime and ultimately back to prison.

I had learned about the prison recidivism rate while an inmate at the military prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. I learned, interestingly, from another inmate, that most men who are released from prison are expected to return within the first three years. We inmates all knew that once we left prison there was a better chance of returning to prison than staying in the community. I was very blessed to, by God's grace, not to return to prison after being released in 1975. Unfortunately, I watched this sad fact unfold over and over again in the lives of those to whom I ministered.

I continued to work in various aspects of ministry to prisoners, ex-prisoners and thier families as I pursued educational advancement. First, I obtained a Bachelor of Religious Education Degree with a double major in Bible and Urban Studies. Later I obtained a Master of Arts Degree in Applied Sociology. As a sociology student at Wayne State University I spent a great deal of time studying the issue of prison recidivism. I discovered a number of theories related to desistance from crime and other

anti-social behaviors. One such theory is Social Integration, first advanced by sociologist, Emile Durhkeim in his book, Suicide: A Study in Sociology. Durhkeim's theory proved that people who have stronger attachments to positive social institutions such as family, work and church are far less likely to commit suicide. Since then, other scholars have applied Durhkeim's theory to other social problems such as crime.

In 1993 I became the founding Director of Detroit Transition of Prisoners (TOP), which was a pilot program of Prison Fellowship Ministries. My responsibility was to build a program model that would assist recently released ex-prisoners to successfully transition back into the community. I chose to use the theory of Social Integration as the basis for the TOP conceptual framework. The independent variables I selected for the program model are family cohesion, employment satisfaction and church integration. I theorized that if we could increase their levels of family cohesion, employment satisfaction and church integration that their levels of recidivism would be lowered.

We collected and analyzed data on the TOP program on a continual basis. A 2000 study, authored by Leon Wilson, Ph.D., Chair for Sociology and Criminal Justice at Wayne State University, analyzing several years of data revealed that only 18% of those who graduated from the TOP Program had any further contact with the criminal justice system within three years. The study proved that TOP graduates were 10 times less likely to return to prison than a control group. Current national statistics show that two-thirds (66%) of those released from prison will be rearrested within three years. Over 50% of those released from prison will be returned to prison as a result of parole violation or the commission of a new crime.

The TOP Program, utilizing the theory of Social Integration, has been very successful in reducing prison recidivism among the former inmates with whom the program has worked. We have found that one of the most significant barriers to a successful transition from prison is re-engagement with old associates. Most of those released from prison express that they want to stay away from drugs, crime and out of prison. Unfortunately, in most cases, there are no positive social networks in place into which returning offenders can integrate.

Jim Towey, Director of the White House, Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, once quoted Mother Theresa of Calcutta as citing loneliness as the worse disease she had ever witnessed. I wholeheartedly concur with her assessment, especially as it relates to men and women who are released from prison. I recall that in my own transition from a life of crime, loneliness was the biggest challenge I faced. For most of my teenage years and all of my adult years, up to that point, all of my close friends and associates were criminals and drug addicts, like me. Like hundreds of thousands of released prisoners today, I found myself without the social and spiritual support I desperately needed. I eventually was successful in establishing a positive social and spiritual support network within my church. The church members offered me practical help in establishing myself as a productive citizen. They inspired me and encouraged me to continue to make improvements in my life. Becoming socially and spiritually integrated into my local church made all the difference in my own life.

TOP offers this same support to the men and women who enter the TOP program. TOP has eighty churches that partner with the organization. The churches provide approximately 120 mentors. Each church-based mentor receives at least ten hours of training. Community-based mentors receive seven hours of training. The role of the

mentor is not only to be a caring supportive friend, but also to draw the former inmate into the life of the church. The positive social integration the former offenders experience in the churches reinforce their goals of staying drug and alcohol free, obtaining meaningful employment, advancing educationally and working toward healthy family life.

As reentry professionals, we naturally realize that men and women have many physical and emotional needs such as transitional and long-term housing, educational and employment assistance, food, clothing and support in remaining substance free. TOP offers all of these services either directly or through referrals to other quality agencies in the community. We consider the Social Integration aspect of our program to be foundational because even if a person acquires a job, housing and the other needed resources but end up drifting back to old, anti-social support networks, it is only a matter of time that they will end up back in prison.

In addition to providing a crucial service to men and women who are released from prison, we estimate that TOP has been able to save the State of Michigan over twenty millions dollars by keeping these men and women from returning to crime and prison. It cost the State approximately $60,000 for the first year a person is sent to prison and approximately $28,000 for each subsequent year. A prison sentence of four years ends up costing taxpayers approximately $144,000. To date approximately 160 men and women have successfully completed the TOP Program. It costs only $7,000 for a person to complete the TOP program. We assert that funds that are currently spent to keep people in prison ought to be diverted to faith-based and community based programs such as TOP.

TOP spun off from Prison Fellowship Ministries in 2000, becoming an independent 501 (c) (3) organization. We are one of the oldest and most experienced faith-based organizations that specialize in prisoner reentry. As such, we have had the opportunity to offer training and technical assistance to many other non-profit organizations and churches around the country and in several foreign countries. We have trained reentry leaders in Australia and New Zealand. The TOP model has been adopted by the government of New Zealand as a national model for prisoner reentry. We have also provided training to several state and local governments across the United States. For the past three years TOP has hosted an annual, national, faith-based, prisoner reentry conference. Last year approximately 320 people from 32 states attended. There were nine different departments of corrections represented at the conference. Most of those who attended, however, represented faith-based and community organizations.

We are currently are in the process of building a national Christian association of reentry professionals called the Christian Association for Prison Aftercare (CAPA). To my knowledge, this will be the first such association. CAPA has been established to provide prison aftercare professionals and volunteers with resources, training and encouragement, as they faithfully serve ex-prisoners and their families. CAPA is designed to serve and network its members, unite them under a shared vision, and train them for excellence in ministry.

We at TOP are committed to continue to provide the highest quality of prisoner reentry services possible to men and women who are Christians and to those who are not of the Christian faith. The Bible says that we are to do good to all men, especially those of the household of faith. We take our role as prisoner reentry leaders very seriously.

We are confident that the conference and the association will play a vital role in advancing the faith-based prisoner reentry movement. Personally, I am confident that there is a bright future for faith-based and community based prisoner reentry. I believe that with the proper training and resources we will be able to begin to curb the tide of men and women streaming back into prison once they have been released into the community.

We all know that prison recidivism is a major problem in the United States. Corrections costs will continue to skyrocket if we are not successful in addressing this very tough social problem. States and communities around the country must begin to look at innovative ways to approach this problem. Successfully addressing the problem will mean that corrections and the community work together. Programs such as TOP have demonstrated at a small scale that recidivism can be significantly impacted. I suggest that resources be committed to test approaches such as the TOP model at a larger scale. I also firmly believe that President Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiative is correct in asserting that faith-based and community organizations are crucial to successfully addressing the issue of prison recidivism and other social problems.

Direct all inquires to: Joseph Williams
CEO
Transition of Prisoner, Inc.
P.O. Box 02938
Detroit, MI 48202
(313) 875-3883 Office
(313) 875-3886 Fax
joewilliams_top@msn.com
www.topinc.net

Mr. SOUDER. Our next witness is Chaplain Robert Toney from the Angola Prison in Louisiana.

Thank you for coming today.

Rev. TONEY. Thank you.

I would like to thank this committee and Brandon Lerch for the opportunity of a lifetime today for me to be here before you distinguished gentlemen and ladies. I also would like to thank my warden of the Louisiana State Penitentiary for the opportunity to represent him today, Warden Burl Cain, and the 5,108 inmates and the 1,800 employees of the Louisiana State Penitentiary.

The Louisiana State Penitentiary is better known as simply Angola. It was once the most violent prison in America. Today, we are known as the safest prison in America. This change began with a warden that believed that change could occur. He also came with a dream that within these walls transformation could take place within the lives of those inmates there and that they could become productive people in our world.

The chaplain and the programs within a prison cannot make this change. The only way that change is possible within America inside the walls of our prison is through the warden, the secretary of corrections and through the Governor's Office; and our warden had that support. He was willing to do it, Secretary of Corrections Richard Stalder was willing to do it, and they had the support of the Governor.

Angola houses the most violent offenders with an average sentence length of 88 years. We have only four types of inmates within our facility: We have murderers, we have aggravated sex offenders, we have habitual offenders, we have short-timers that were so violent they could not be kept in another facility so they sent them to us in Angola.

Warden Cain brought this moral change 10 years ago to Angola.

Moral rehabilitation is the only rehabilitation that works. If you just have education, what you have done is just created a smarter criminal. The change must come from within.

The New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, a 4-year, accredited college, was started in 1997 within the walls of Angola. This school exists today without any tax dollars. This school is supported by the local churches, the Judson Baptist Association of Churches.

In 1997, we had our first group of inmates graduate from this school, and I want to remind you they are graduating with a B.A. degree that is an accredited degree, that when they are out of the system can be built upon with a master's degree or doctoral degree.

We had our first group that graduated. We put these to work as inmate ministers. We put them to work all over our prison. It is their job to minister and serve others. Inmates put down the knives and the weapons and they picked up the Bible.

I have a graph that I have given to you today that shows that during this 10-year period of Warden Cain's administration, the more rehabilitation has occurred, the violence of inmates on inmates, inmates on staff, has gone down to nearly nothing.

We had a culture change. We have no profanity. Profanity is only one step away from violence. If we can keep it out of our prisons, we are two steps away from violence.

We sent missionaries from Angola to the other prisons within our State. A missionary, as we would call it, is one of our inmates that graduated from our 4-year college. In 2005, we will have 50 more graduates with a 4-year degree. We will have a graduation like any other college. Moms and dads are going to come. The president of the seminary, Dr. Chuck Kelley, from New Orleans, LA, will be there, along with other professors. They will be in their attire of their gowns and their caps. In many inmates' lives, this will be the first positive accomplishment in their entire life. Moms and dads will get to see their sons accomplish a great goal.

The New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is not just Baptists, it is for all faiths. Within this seminary, within this college, we have Pentecostal, Methodists, Episcopal, Muslim, Jehovah's Witnesses, Church of Latter Day Saints—non-religion.

It is non-religion. It is moral education. We want you to have morality, because character counts.

All religious groups have grown as a result of this school being inside our walls. The culture of the bloodiest prison in America has changed. Morality exists, hope lives, men have been rehabilitated. The men who have gone home after completing this program have not returned to prison.

Angola, out of 5,108 inmates, has only 1,400 of our inmates living in a cell. Most of our population live in a dormitory setting, and I want you to know they live in peace. Tonight they will be able to go to sleep and not have to worry about someone taking their life.

We have church 7 nights a week, 7 days a week. We had 11,000 outside volunteers enter our prison in 2004 conducting various types of ministry. Ms. America came to Angola in 2003. She walked all over our prison without one whistle or catcall. You are safer in Angola tonight than you are on the streets of Washington, DC.

If you want the prison systems changed in America, it is moral rehabilitation. Our Secretary Richard Stalder says, "Faith in a prison makes our prisons safer." Faith doesn't need to be a side street, but it needs to be the Main Street.

Warden Cain has said, even an atheist warden would want faith within a prison, because faith within a prison system makes a prison safer. People can change. Moral rehabilitation works.

The New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary began a 4-year degree program in Mississippi this year at Parchman. Georgia is looking next week at our system. Florida is looking. Alabama is looking. Arkansas is looking. Moody Bible College is ready to take on this same challenge in Illinois if the door will open.

Remember, no tax dollars. The church of America will pay for this. It won't cost the government anything. The church of America is waiting for a vehicle to drive. All you have to do is put us in the driver's seat, give us an opportunity to change it, and it can take place. You can watch recidivism go down immediately.

This year, One Day With God occurred within our walls. We brought in 300 children of our inmates to reconnect with their father. This had never happened in the history of Angola. We are a maximum security prison for the State. We are not a medium security or minimum security. Because of a warden that wants to make a difference, change has occurred.

Angola represents the true spirit of America. This is what happens when you have true morality. I would like to invite each one of you, on behalf of our Warden Burl Cain and our Secretary Richard Stalder, to come and see the truth for yourself.

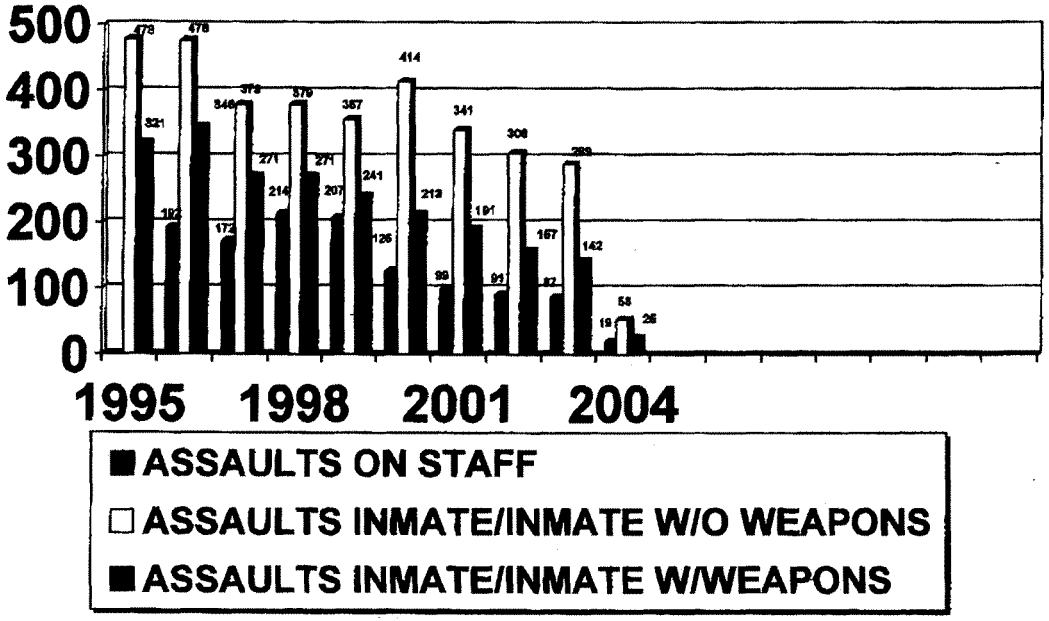
Thank you today.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much.

[The information referred to follows:]

LOUISIANA STATE PENITENTIARY

(Statistics based on 5, 108 inmates)



In 1996 Moral Rehabilitation started at Louisiana State Penitentiary

Mr. SOUDER. Our next witness is Mr. Frederick Davie, senior vice president of public policy, Public-Private Ventures. Thank you for coming.

STATEMENT OF FREDERICK A. DAVIE

Mr. DAVIE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Members, and Ranking Member Cummings. Thank you very much. And thanks to you for taking the time to examine this issue. I also want to thank Congressman Davis and Congressman Portman for your work on behalf of the returning offender population.

Public-Private Ventures is a national nonprofit organization seeking to improve the effectiveness of social policies and programs, with a particular emphasis on work force development issues. Public-Private Ventures designs, tests and studies initiatives that increase opportunities for the residents of low-income communities.

As has been stated here already today, every year nearly 760,000 ex-prisoners threaten the already tenuous cohesion of many of the country's most troubled communities. In response, Public-Private Ventures developed and launched a $32½ million national reentry initiative. We call it Ready4Work, An Ex-prisoner, Faith and Community Initiative. We have done it in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Labor and Justice and the Annie E. Casey and the Ford Foundation.

I want to thank Secretary Chow and her staff, especially Brent Orrell, who is the DOL's Director of Faith and Community Initiatives, as well as Robert Florez, who is an Administrative OJDDP at the Justice Department and his staff, Gwendolyn Dilworth, for creating this partnership with us.

Ready4Work operates in areas of high crime to strengthen local networks of young adults and juveniles as they reenter their communities following detention or incarceration. Our primary mission is to connect ex-offenders with employment opportunities and to help them find housing, transportation and child care support they need to sustain that employment. Each participant is also matched with a volunteer mentor recruited through local faith-based and community organizations to provide personal support and assistance.

There are 16 sites across the country, both secular and faith-based. I have included a full list for the record, and Public-Private Ventures would be happy to facilitate contact between this committee or any other Members of Congress and any other participating organizations.

Ready4Work is currently in its second year of operation. The sites have so far recruited over 2,000 participants, all nonviolent, nonsexual, except for prostitution felony offenders. Eighty-five percent of the participants are male, nearly 80 percent are African Americans.

Of the adult participants, nearly 100 percent are receiving case management, 64 percent have been placed in jobs, and nearly half have been matched with mentors.

In the juvenile sites, 64 percent are African American and 84 percent are male. Half are between the ages of 17 and 19. Almost 100 percent of the juveniles are receiving case management, 79

percent are being mentored, 60 percent are receiving educational services, and 67 percent are receiving employment services.

What sets Ready4Work apart from traditional reentry efforts is its focus on placing local, faith-based and community organizations at the heart of the network that greets folks when they come out of prison. We believe that these organizations are a unique source of accountability and support for returning offenders. They are frequently located in the most deeply affected neighborhoods, as we have heard, and they have resources that can make a difference between success and failure for a returnee.

Frankly, the compassion and commitment that these groups bring to the work is irreplaceable.

We also benefit immeasurably from our partnership with the business community and its willingness to employ Ready4Work participants. We applaud those of you who have moved this issue of reentry to the top of Congress' agenda. Public-Private Ventures believes that the Second Chance Act provides a solid basis for creating a national policy aimed at reducing crime and recidivism. We also believe that the bill should be strengthened to find ways to direct more assistance toward the faith community and community institutions.

We further believe that Congress should look for ways to match the program experience and technical capacity of organizations like ours with the people power of smaller groups. This has been the Ready4Work model, one that we believe offers an excellent chance to break the cycle of crime and imprisonment for the benefit of returning offenders and their communities.

I want to thank you again for this opportunity, and we look forward to continuing to work with the 109th Congress to enact meaningful reentry legislation.

Thank you very much.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Davie follows:]

Public/Private Ventures

Siobhan Nicolau
Board Chair

Gary Walker
President

Board of Directors
Amalia V. Betanzos
Yvonne Chan
Mitchell S. Fromstein
Christine L. James-Brown
John A. Mayer, Jr.
Matthew McGuire
Maurice Lim Miller
Anne Hodges Morgan
Siobhan Nicolau
Marion Pines
Cay Stratton
Gary Walker
William Julius Wilson

Research Advisory Committee
Jacquelynne Eccles, Chair
Ronald Ferguson
Robinson Hollister
Alan Krueger
Reed Larson
Milbrey W. McLaughlin
Katherine Newman
Laurence Steinberg
Thomas Weisner

2000 Market Street
Suite 600
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Tel: 215/557-4400
Fax: 215/557-4469
Net: http://www.ppv.org

The Chanin Building
122 East 42nd Street
42nd Floor
New York, NY 10168
Tel: 212/822-2400
Fax: 212/949-0439

Lake Merritt Plaza
1999 Harrison Street
Suite 1550
Oakland, CA 94612
Tel: 510/273-4600
Fax: 510/273-4619

United States House of Representatives
Committee on Government Reform and Oversight

"Confronting Recidivism: Prisoner Re-entry Programs and a Just Future for All Americans"

Testimony by
Frederick A. Davie, Senior Vice President of Public Policy
Public/Private Ventures
February 2, 2005

I want to start by thanking Chairman Davis and the Committee for taking the time to examine this important issue and for providing Public/Private Ventures with the opportunity to testify today. I also want to thank Congressmen Portman and Davis for their work on legislation in support of the returning offender population.

I am Fred Davie, Senior Vice President of Public Policy at P/PV, a national nonprofit organization that seeks to improve the effectiveness of social policies and programs, with particular emphasis on workforce development issues. P/PV designs, tests, and studies initiatives that increase support, skills and opportunities for residents of low-income communities with an eye toward informing the development of public policy.

Every year, approximately 760,000 prison inmates and juvenile detainees are released from secure detention facilities and returned to their communities and families. Disconnected from the labor market and from social networks and at high risk of re-engaging in criminal behaviors, the return of these ex-prisoners threatens the already tenuous cohesion of many of the most troubled communities in the country.

In response to the crisis of crime and recidivism, in 2003 P/PV developed and launched a $32.5 million national faith-based and community reentry initiative—***Ready4Work: An Ex-Prisoner, Faith and Community Initiative***—in partnership with the U.S. Departments of Labor and Justice and the Annie E. Casey and Ford Foundations. *Ready4Work* operates in areas of high crime to strengthen local support networks for young adults and juveniles as they reenter their communities following detention and/or incarceration.

The primary mission of *Ready4Work* is to connect ex-offenders with employment opportunities and help participants find the non-work-related supports (housing, transportation, childcare) that they need to sustain employment. Each participant is also matched to a volunteer mentor recruited through local faith-based and community organizations to provide personal support and assistance.

The 16 sites in this initiative can be found across the country and are both secular and faith-based. We operate adult sites in Oakland, Detroit, Washington, DC, New York City, Milwaukee, Jacksonville, FL, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles and Houston. The juvenile sites are located in Seattle, Brooklyn, Los Angeles, Boston and Camden, NJ. I have included a full list of the participating institutions for the record, and P/PV would be happy to facilitate contact between the Committee and our participating organizations if follow-up is necessary or desired.

Ready4Work is currently in its second year of operation. The sites have thus far recruited over 2,000 participants—all nonviolent, non-sexual (except prostitution) felony offenders. Eighty-five percent of *Ready4Work* participants are male and nearly 80 percent are African Americans. Almost all participants return to the same few zip codes in each of the participating cities. Of the active adult participants, nearly 100 percent are receiving case management services; 64 percent of participants entering year two of the program have been placed in jobs; nearly half of eligible participants have been matched with mentors.

In the juvenile sites, the demographics are as follows: 64 percent of the young people served are African Americans; 84 percent are male. Half are between the ages of 17 and 19, with 38 percent under the age of 17, and 12 percent ages 20 or older. Of the active participants, almost 100 percent are receiving case management services; 79 percent are being mentored, 60% are receiving educational services and 67 percent are receiving employment services.

What sets *Ready4Work* apart from traditional reentry efforts is its focus on placing faith-based and community organizations at the heart of the reentry network. Based on our previous efforts with high-risk youth, we believe these organizations are a unique source of accountability and support for returning offenders. They are frequently located in the most deeply affected neighborhoods and have leadership, volunteer, social and spiritual resources that can make the difference between success and failure for a returnee. Frankly, the compassion and commitment these groups can and do bring to the work of reentry is irreplaceable.

We have been very pleased to see and hear the conversations in Washington, D.C. and across the country around the issue of prisoner reentry. We applaud the Committee, Congressmen Portman and Davis, Senators Brownback and Biden, and others who have moved this issue to the top of Congress' agenda. P/PV believes that the Second Chance Act provides a solid basis for creating a national policy aimed at reducing crime and recidivism.

We also believe, however that the bill should be strengthened to find ways of directing more assistance toward the faith- and community-based groups that are the front-line institutions in this effort. Further, we believe that Congress should look for ways to match the program experience and technical-assistance capacity of larger, intermediary organizations with the "people power" these small faith-based and community groups offer. This has been the *Ready4Work* model—one that we believe offers the best chance to break the cycle of crime and imprisonment for the benefit of returning offenders and their communities.

Thank you again, Chairman Davis, for taking P/PV's efforts into consideration. We look forward to continuing to work with the 109th Congress to enact meaningful reentry legislation.

Adult Ready4Work Sites:

- Allen Temple Baptist Church, Oakland, CA
- America Works with Hartford Memorial Baptist Church, Detroit, MI
- East of the River Clergy Police Community Partnership, Washington, DC
- Exodus Transitional Community, East Harlem, NY
- Holy Cathedral/Word of Hope Ministries, Milwaukee, WI
- Operation New Hope, Jacksonville, FL
- SAFER Foundation, Chicago, IL
- Search for Common Ground/Philadelphia Consensus Group, Philadelphia, PA
- The City of Memphis/Second Chance Program, Memphis, TN
- Union Rescue Mission, Los Angeles, CA
- Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church/Moving Forward InnerChange Freedom Initiative, Houston, TX

Juvenile Ready4Work Sites:

- Council of Churches of Greater Seattle, Seattle, WA
- Girls Re-entry Assistance and Support Program/The Office of the Kings Country District Attorney, Brooklyn, NY
- Los Angeles Ten Point Coalition/West Angeles Church of God In Christ, Los Angeles, CA
- Straight Ahead Ministries, Boston, MA
- Volunteers of America, Camden, NJ

Mr. SOUDER. And now that Sammy Sosa apparently is heading to Congressman Cummings' district, you will be our clean-up person from Chicago.

Mr. George A.H. Williams, Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, from Chicago, IL. Thank you for your patience today.

STATEMENT OF GEORGE A.H. WILLIAMS

Mr. GEORGE WILLIAMS. Thank you. Thank you very much. Yes, as a matter of fact, we are going to miss Sammy very much.

To the chairman, thank you, sir. It is good seeing you again. The last time I saw you was in Chicago on the West Side at Congressman Davis' district when you had your committee hearing there. I would like to thank you today for having this process here.

And to the past president, Congressman Elijah Cummings, of the Congressional Black Caucus, thank you, sir, for your tenure in that process. I appreciate all the hard work you have done and will do over the years.

And to my esteemed Congressman and my trusted leader, Mr. Congressman Danny Davis—he is my Congressman, but most importantly, he is a trusted leader, a man that has the trust of his district, of the men that live in his district.

I am going to talk a little bit about my organization, TSAC. Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities is a statewide, not-for-profit organization that provides access to recovery and other specialized services to individuals in Illinois involved in the criminal justice systems, and the corrections, juvenile justice, child welfare, public aid systems also. TSAC programs reaches over 30,000 people across the State each year, including correctional transition programs that provide clinical case management for more than 4,000 adults annually who are reentering the community following incarceration.

TSAC works with an array of service providers and community partners, including treatment, recovery, support, nontraditional, traditional organizations, faith-based throughout the State of Illinois.

We at TSAC are in full support of the Second Chance Act to help to reduce the numerous barriers facing men and women, families and communities as well. The Second Chance Act is a necessary step toward reducing the high recidivism rate and the costs that accompany recidivism and repeat incarceration, including the threat to public health, public safety.

This legislation begins the process of ensuring better coordination and planning for relief, providing necessary drug treatment and recovery support services, job training, education, housing, family assistance upon release. TSAC strongly urges Congress to support this legislation to provide the health, justice, welfare and safety to all of our residents and communities.

Thank you very much for this legislation and for this discussion.

Now I want to spend a few seconds on a particular component of our services that we call "restoring citizenship." The work that we do is primarily focused on how do you go into the man and the woman to get them to look within themselves, as well, with all of these external supports that are available. Because if you keep in mind, most men and most women go into the system because they

have offended. They don't come out of the system because they offended, they went into the system because they offended. That means there was something there in the beginning that attracted that type of lifestyle.

As a matter of fact, I was searching in my mind some time ago about the first crime, and I started reading books and trying to do some research. Somehow I was led to the Bible. In the Bible there is a situation in there where God asks one of the humans a question, where was his brother? And he responded to God, why are you asking me? I mean, am I my brother's keeper? And right then and there for me was probably reflective of what we are up against.

When man lied to God about a crime that he committed, did we inherit that consciousness and that spirit as we go forth and try to look at and dismantle so many pieces to criminality.

It is just not the behavior; it is that men and women can exist in communities where the behavior is validated, sometimes within their family structure, within their community structure. So how do we also begin to dismantle those processes? And within the Seventh Congressional District, we have processes in place in terms of where we are engaging communities to dismantle some of the norms that exist, where men can exist in those kinds of behaviors and don't get called out.

We are trying to call them out and make them to be accountable and to crush some of those support systems that allow them to exist as well.

Behavior is an extremely difficult proposition sometimes, and I know that the work we are doing right now, this is a movement. This movement around reentry is very early, but this is a real strong, powerful movement to look at men and women and to help them think about establishing and restoring their citizenship, their rights and responsibilities. Because all over this country, in the urban areas, in the rural areas, in the suburban areas, you have men and women crying out, asking for a chance to be self-sufficient and asking this country for a second chance. And at some point in time we as a people have to answer the question, at what point in time do men and women stop serving time?

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. George Williams follows:]

Statement of
George A. H. Williams
Director of Community Partnerships
TASC, Inc.

before
the Committee on Government Reform
United States House of Representatives

February 2, 2005

TASC in Illinois

TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities) is a statewide not-for-profit organization that provides access to recovery and other specialized services for individuals involved in Illinois' criminal justice, corrections, juvenile justice, child welfare and public aid systems. TASC's programs reach over 30,000 people across the State each year, including its Corrections Transitional Programs that provide clinical case management to more than 4,000 adults annually who are reentering the community following incarceration. TASC works with an array of service providers and community partners, including treatment, recovery support, non-traditional providers and faith-based organizations throughout Illinois.

TASC is challenged every day with helping our clients to overcome the existing obstacles that prevent them from accessing critical services and resources. Most of our clients are ill-equipped for lives of stability, health and self-sufficiency. Many have substance use or mental health issues that were in existence before their incarceration. Many need legitimate employment, stable housing and community support to have any hope of a crime-free lifestyle. For most of our clients, successful reintegration requires the careful and deliberate navigation of an array of programs, public systems, communities and the demands and expectations placed on returning offenders.

To address the many barriers faced by our clients, TASC helps parolees complete their justice requirements and successfully reintegrate into their communities. Our programs work to develop collaborative, systems-level responses that balance the supervisory, health, welfare and justice needs of the ex-offender, his or her family and community. By acting as an independent entity, TASC utilizes a clinical case management approach to integrate all of these requirements into a service delivery plan tailored to the unique needs of each individual and is also responsive to the need for accountability, public safety and efficient use of public resources.

A primary goal for TASC's case management model is "restoring citizenship." This entails supporting and guiding former offenders as they learn positive ways of thinking, living and being. TASC transforms lives formerly characterized by involvement with drugs and the criminal justice system by working with individuals to learn the meaning and rewards of genuine self-care and respect for others. TASC clients develop the skills,

attitudes and behaviors that are consistent with good citizenship, including assuming responsibility for self-direction and making positive contributions to their families, workplaces and communities. In the process of restoring citizenship, there is a healing of past harms and reassurance to victims, families and communities that change is possible. To accomplish these goals, TASC also works closely with community members and organizations to help them build their own capacity to support and reintegrate ex-offenders.

The Second Chance Act

TASC is in full support of The Second Chance Act to help reduce the numerous barriers facing men and women as a result of incarceration. The Second Chance Act is a necessary first step toward reducing the high recidivism rate and the costs that accompany recidivism and repeated incarcerations, including threats to public health and safety. This legislation begins the process for ensuring better coordination and planning for release, providing necessary drug treatment and recovery support services, job training and education, housing services and family assistance upon release. TASC strongly urges Congress to support this legislation to improve the health, justice, welfare and safety of all of our residents and communities. Thank you Chairman Davis and members of the Committee for your inviting me to testify before you today.

Mr. SOUDER. Well, thank you all for your testimony.

I wanted to just ask Chaplain Toney again, did you say the average was 88 years in the sentence?

Rev. TONEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. SOUDER. I just wanted to make sure I heard that right, in case I quote that sometime. I am not used to that number.

One of the challenges that we face—just to be very open as we try to work through this legislation, one of the great things with today's hearing is, it suggests some possibilities about how we address this.

There are several things that are happening, whether anybody likes them or not, and that is State funding is flat at best and not inflation-adjusted even, just flat funding. Federal funding is tight, and the problems are not, overall, going down. In fact, crime has gone down, but that is because we lock so many people up.

Now they are about to come back out, and what does that mean?

This is a huge challenge. That is why we have expanded discussions about faith-based and community organizations and business organizations, because it doesn't matter whether you have a Republican or a Democratic Governor, it doesn't matter who is in charge of the legislature, it doesn't matter who is in charge, the money is not going up. So how do we deal with this?

We also have another sociological, demographic problem that was alluded to from the beginning today that is a huge challenge politically, and that is that the most difficult crime, if not all crime, is certainly skewed to inside the black male community and in the minority community and in the urban areas. It doesn't mean there isn't crime elsewhere, it doesn't mean there are not addictions to pornography or other types of problems in all sorts of suburbs, and it doesn't mean that the majority, or close to the majority, of people in prisons are not majority white population. But it does mean that this disproportionately hits urban centers and disproportionately hits the minority community.

It is also true that those population areas overall in the United States have declined. So there are fewer Members of Congress from those areas. And politically it becomes harder to move legislation that focuses on those communities as they are less representative of the whole of the United States.

And it isn't surprising necessarily that the Congressmen at our hearing today that were most interested were from Los Angeles and Baltimore and Kansas City and Chicago and Washington, DC, and major metropolitan areas, because they have the most stake in it.

The problem is, to pass this legislation, how do we broaden our base? How does this base reach the majority community, as some of you have reached out and said you have obligations here?

One is a cost question, which is cheaper? But, quite frankly, it is not absolutely clear which is cheaper. At some point, because of the difficulty of this, it is cheaper, but it is not guaranteed cheaper based on the housing questions, job training questions and all of the other kinds of things that we need to do.

There is a moral obligation with it, and I think what is interesting and what I believe is a potential breakthrough opportunity with this is that as you hear people like Pat, and we have known

each other for at least 35 years, like you know Congressman Doolittle and Congressman Royce and Congressman Dana Rohrabacher, because we all grew up together in the conservative movement, that having people who have gone through this, not that I want to or recommend other Members of Congress go to prison for 24 months to figure out the difficulty of it, but to try to figure out and hear from people who share our ideology make a passionate appeal of both the need to mentor, the time, the obligation to spend the time, and the need for services and how we address the follow-through, and the difficulty, given some of the laws that we passed, that our constituents support and polls show they still support and even want them to be tougher. This is a huge dilemma as we work this through in Congress.

But when we hear—and one of the things the American people are desperate for is hope. They see recidivism rates go up. They see the problems seem to be there. We battle on this drug issue all the time. This is a drug policy committee.

But when we hear in Angola prison a story like that, or we hear individual cases like we heard today, or cases that this is going on in Detroit, not known as an easy city necessarily to work in, or in Washington, DC, which has been the murder capital of the United States 7 of the last 8 years, that to listen to those kind of programs offers hope. And I hope that today's hearing can advance that, that in fact—because if this is viewed as just a traditional way to transfer more money into urban communities and gets an "us against them" type of mentality in battling for dollars, which is often where the rubber meets the road here in Congress, it isn't going to go anywhere.

This has been a very difficult process, to even get this bill launched. It sounds great, it is very moving, but in the reality of how bills become law, it is hard. I think you have suggested a number of things today, and it has been great to hear all of your testimonies about different things that have worked well.

I may have a particular question here to wrap up the hearing, but let me yield to Mr. Cummings.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

What you were just saying, as I sit here, I couldn't help but say to myself that trying to get the public to realize that people can do their time and then go out into the world and be productive is so very, very hard; and that, as testimony, has been stated over and over again in this hearing here today, that a prison sentence—or not necessarily a sentence, a conviction dooms a person for a lifetime.

Mr. Williams, I just want to go to something that you said, and I am so glad you brought this out. I actually in my law practice and when I was a State delegate, hired former inmates to give them a chance. One of the things that I realized early on is that prison does take more away from a person than their freedom. I noticed just the whole being on schedule, time, coming to work on time was a problem. It is like they had to readjust.

I noticed another very interesting thing that came up not long ago. We had a fellow in Maryland who was wrongfully accused and served 27 years and got out, and his fiance said that even after he

got out, he would stay in the basement and wouldn't come out. She said she could hardly get him to come out of the basement, and he would just sit there.

I think a lot of people don't realize. They think about just the physical incarceration. They don't think about the fact that it really does something to a person. It takes them out of society. And that reintegration thing is so significant.

I was talking a little bit earlier about the program that we had in Baltimore. When you talk about integration and you talk about family, I think you said church.

Mr. JOSEPH WILLIAMS. And employment.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And employment. One of the things that we noticed—take for example with family, fellows, the volunteers who had done pretty well in life would come on Saturdays, and we would have like a 12-step program where people sit around and talk about their lives or whatever. But they would open up into social activities with folk who had been in prison and want their families together, and it made a world of difference, because then they became more attached to the family.

We also had a fatherhood piece, where fathers could reconnect with their children. So that gave them something to hold onto as opposed to the streets. It gave them somebody kind of looking over their shoulder, and somebody else to disappoint if anything went wrong.

The same thing with work. I think a lot of people don't realize how significant work is. A lot of jobs create a whole new set of family members, because they found they begin to socialize with these folks, they became a team at work, depending on what kind of job it was, a team at work, and had new people, new people getting up at 6 a.m., maybe getting off at 5 p.m., and talking about things other than committing a crime; and they had something else, they had hope.

Because a lot of these jobs had opportunities for them to move up in life. Things that are very basic to those who may not have gone through the system, but we take them for granted. But the fact is that all of that I think is needed to make a person whole. And certainly church.

As the son of two preachers, I found a lot of the people in our church will come. They will have, again, a reintegration, a whole other family to connect with, and a family that is not dealing with drugs, a family not committing crime, a family where the norm is to do the right thing.

So it is just a whole lot. But I am glad you brought that aspect. And I didn't hear your testimony, Mr. Nolan. Maybe you hit on that, too, and others. But I just think that is a part, no matter what we have to do, we have to deal with that piece.

Any comments, sir?

Mr. JOSEPH WILLIAMS. Yes, I wholeheartedly agree with you.

Back in 1981, when I was making the transition from a life of crime to one of being productive in the community, the greatest challenge I faced—many times people ask me what was the greatest challenge I faced, was it struggling with the addiction issue or the lifestyle issue? But it was loneliness. Because for 13 years, most of my teenage years and all of my adult years up to that

point, all of my associations and friendships were with criminals and drug addicts.

And so, now, I was drug free. I wanted to do the right thing, but I was very lonely. And I heard that Mother Teresa was quoted as citing—she was asked, what was the greatest disease that she had ever seen, the most devastating disease she had ever seen? And she cited it was loneliness. And that loneliness, because I didn't have the kinds of people, the pro-social types of people to fellowship with and to direct me in the right way, was a danger of driving me back to my old associates and back to the old behaviors. And I wonder, with the other two former inmates who testified earlier, that had I not been able to, through my church, make all those new associations through friendships and through school and through employment, that I would not be here today.

Mr. CUMMINGS. How does government—and this is my last question—how does a program like the one we are talking about, how do we in government—we can only do but so much. But what do you see us doing, or you all see us doing, and I assume we pretty much all agree that's a big part of it, to get people more socially integrated?

I mean, what do you see government's role in that, if any?

Mr. JOSEPH WILLIAMS. Yes, and I don't think that it is something that the government can do per se, but I think the greatest role that government can take on is to build the capacity of organizations such as Transition of Prisoners and these organizations who have been committed to this cause for a number of years.

And unfortunately, what happens is, you know, we have thrown around some figures of some $300 million and $100 million, and so a lot of nonprofits will develop a desire to go into re-entry because of that. But there's been a lot of organizations that have been out here for years and have been committed to it, and they are going to do it whether the funding is there or not. But they don't have the capacity to really do it at a large scale.

So I think that the best thing that government could do is to build the capacity of community-based and faith-based organizations as we build the capacity of the churches. And that way, I believe that we will be able to sustain our programs. And we know that the funding will not be there forever, but we need a way to build our capacity so that we could continue to do this work after the funding is gone.

Mr. NOLAN. If I could answer, too, the government could also view churches as a partner. Justice Fellowship sponsored a conference and the head of transition services from New Mexico attended it, and he said it never occurred to him to look to the churches for mentors.

He was in charge of finding mentors, and he was going to all of these community groups and not having much success. And it never occurred to him to go to churches. And so he called me when he got home, and he said, half of the folks in New Mexico are Catholics. And I am not a Catholic. What do I do?

And I knew the bishop there, and the Catholic Church provided a nun full-time to organize parishes to recruit mentors. And the Protestants, several churches got together and hired somebody

half-time. And all he had to do was just be open to that. And, frankly, a lot of government officials aren't open to that.

They think it's improper to have a relationship. Again, they view churches as maybe providing an education program, or it's programmatic as opposed to a partner. Then a lot of States have policies that put up barriers. Many States have a policy that says, if you mentor someone in prison, the prisoner is prohibited from being in a relationship with you when you get out of prison. The Federal Bureau of Prisons has that policy. If a volunteer comes in and mentors you in prison, you are prohibited from being in touch with them when they get out. Texas had that policy. IFI had——

Mr. SOUDER. Would you elaborate on that? I don't understand.

Mr. NOLAN. Yes. The idea is that the inmates are all cons and, therefore, will take advantage of these volunteers when they get out; that the volunteers would be victims of the offenders when they get out, and so they have to sever that relationship.

Most States have that policy, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons has that policy. Texas had that policy, and IFI had to have an exemption. Texas still has that policy. And IFI is exempted from that policy.

Let me say one last thing. Now, Director Wilkinson is definitely an exception to this. But most prison systems are built on or structured around what is convenient for the system. If nobody riots and nobody escapes, they are a good warden. If somebody riots and somebody escapes, they are bad.

Therefore, volunteers, religious volunteers and mentors are a threat to their careers, because every time a volunteer comes in, there might be contraband there; there might be something there, and so it's easier to exclude those volunteers. They are a pain in the neck. They are more work to the people with that attitude.

Institutional security is more important than—and, in fact, one warden said to me that the way he was trained—now he's different in this. But the way he was trained in Oklahoma was that, if nobody rioted and nobody escaped, he was a good warden. If that prisoner walked out of prison 1 block and raped or murdered somebody, that was still OK because they hadn't done it on his watch.

And we need to change that attitude to where corrections people view public safety as their role.

And that whole mindset—if public safety is a role, then you welcome religious volunteers and mentors. And Burl Cain—you know, I have been to Angola. It is a different atmosphere. The inmates look you in the eye. They have hope even. The reason that 88 years is the average sentence is because most of them are going to die in prison there. And Warden Cain has changed it so they are buried with dignity. The choir sings. They can make their own casket or another inmate can.

They have created a carriage with horses to draw it. They have a ceremony to bear them. They used to be just buried in cardboard boxes in paupers' graves. Now there's a ceremony to honor their life with their friends. They are treated like human beings whose lives matter.

And you see it in the way that the inmates talk—outsiders the way they talk to each other, the respect with which they treat each other and are treated by the staff.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I just have one other thing.

Mr. Nolan, as I listened to you talk, I have to tell you, I became a little bit depressed when you talked about them, you know, the caskets and everything.

I guess one of the things that I am—and maybe nobody else will say this, but I am going to say it—you know, there are so many people in my community who come upon the Earth, and because of circumstances, a lot of times, and some poor decisions sometimes, they don't believe that they can live the kind of life that other people live.

And I will never forget one time when I went to speak at a prison, and I looked around, and I was speaking at a graduation. And if you did not see the guards in the room, I would have sworn you were at a church.

I guess my point is that, you know, some kind of way—I want to see people believe that they don't have to—the prison doesn't have to be a part of their lives.

Mr. NOLAN. Right.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And I don't want to get to a point where—and I am not knocking anybody who has gone through that process—but, I tell you, I want people to have hope. I don't necessarily talk about coping skills; I talk about hoping skills. Because I think when you lose hope—and that my hope is to have a nice funeral in a prison, and a fellow inmate is making me a casket, to me that ain't no hope. That's not hope to me. That does not excite me.

What does excite me is trying to—although some of these gentlemen and women, perhaps, may not ever get out, but for them to know that, every day, they can be better than they were the day before, that's hope under those circumstances. It's hope knowing that they can perhaps counsel a younger inmate and try to show him or her the path to that, when they get out, to how you have things that they want to consider, things of that nature.

And I don't want—I tell you, I don't want us to adopt a philosophy—you know, one of the things I say all the time is, we have one life to live, and this is no dress rehearsal, and this is the life.

And sometimes I think that when we get into scenarios like that, like, you know, the big deal is to be able to make a casket, and what that reminds me of, one of the guys in my neighborhood, because I live in the inner city, Baltimore, who believe they are going to die before they are 18.

So what is their, I mean, so—committing a crime is not as big of a deal because they don't expect to be here.

What I am saying to you is that we have to, no matter what we do in our prison systems, I think we have to create a sense of hope.

And I know, I am not sitting here trying to sound like somebody who is some flaming liberal who thinks he is supposed to be paying for people who commit crimes. I know what it is to be a victim of a crime. I know what it is to have a gun, sawed-off shot gun, two of them, pointed at my head at 2 a.m. I understand it.

But at the same time I don't want us to move to that point where we think that it's nice that somebody can make a casket for me in prison and bury me on prison ground. I don't think that sends a very powerful message at all, to be frank with you.

Mr. NOLAN. I didn't want to send that message. I wanted to say they are treated with dignity so they can live a life of consequence even if we are never going to let them out. That is what Warden Cain has done and the seminary where they can do exactly what you said, spread hope to the other prisoners. They even have a culinary class. They even have the chefs from New Orleans come up and teach them to create terrific, you know, high-level cuisine for the other inmates.

Mr. CUMMINGS. But, see, the thing is that I know for a fact, once, one little decision in my life could have put me in the same position as a lot of those folks that find themselves in prison.

Mr. NOLAN. And one of the things we want to work with you on is sentencing, because these long sentences are horribly cruel in many cases.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Right, there you go.

Thank you.

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Davis.

Mr. DAVIS. Thank you, again, Mr. Chairman. Let me again commend you and Ranking Member Cummings for holding this hearing.

I also want to thank this group of witnesses especially for coming to testify.

I agree with you when you talk about the difficulty of passing legislation, and especially when you talk about the differences that exist in different geographic areas, big cities versus smaller towns, urban areas versus rural areas, where the impact of certain issues are not felt as great.

Pat, it is always good to be where you are, talking about your experiences, and what you have seen and what you have done. And I thank you for continuing to do that.

Mr. Williams, it's—I think the kind of light that you shared and the kind of inspiration that you give and the kind of hope that you convey to others who may be in the same circumstances and situations that you have once been in.

Chaplain Toney, I grew up about 10 miles from what we used to call the Louisiana line. And so I knew about Angola when I was a child growing up in Arkansas.

And, of course, our parents would admonish us, whenever we went to Louisiana, that we better not get into any trouble because, if we did, we might end up in Angola.

And, of course, that spoke to the reputation that Angola had at that time. And to see how it's changing—as a matter of fact, I have an invitation from some inmates in Angola to visit that I have been trying to figure out when I could work that out, if I could work it out, in terms of my schedule.

Mr. TONEY. Any time.

Mr. DAVIS. And I am going to put more effort on to it to try to work it out from hearing your testimony today and what you have conveyed.

George, it is always good to hear you talk about the work of TASC and what it does, and coming from your own experiences. And I also want to thank you not only for changing your schedule to come and to be here, but also for serving as co-chairman of our ex-offender task force in the 7th Congressional District back in Illi-

nois. And the work that task does to help raise the level of understanding about these issues.

When I look at the panel knowing, for example, that three of you, at least, are what people would call ex-offenders, that there are three of you on the panel who are dignified citizens, who are self-sufficient, who are professional at what you do. I think that conveys a kind of hope in and of itself.

Because what it really says is that there are thousands and perhaps hundreds of thousands of others who find themselves in a position that you once were in.

And if given assistance, if given the opportunities, if provided the resources, they, too, become productive citizens. They, too, become self-sufficient. They, too, become contributing members of society, and that's exactly what I think we are trying to do is to indeed provide hope for those who have become hopeless, to provide help for those who think that they might be helpless and to help individuals know that it's not always a matter of where you have been, but it's also a matter of where you are going.

And I believe that our criminal justice system can, in fact, change.

Mr. GEORGE WILLIAMS. Yes, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. That it can, in fact, be different.

What I think government can provide is the impetus. But as others have already said, it does take a movement. And the only way there is a movement, there has to be the people. And I mean, you have given me so much hope.

Mr. Davis, organizations like yours that are really looking and searching—I think we know that it's not going to be easy.

Mr. GEORGE WILLIAMS. No, yes, sir.

Mr. DAVIS. I mean, I grew up listening to my folks tell us, you know the Langston Hughes stuff, that life ain't been no crystal stair, had a lot of tacks and a lot of holes in it. But we have just got to keep trying.

And that's what the Second Chance Act attempts to do. That's what the Public Safety Self-Sufficiency Act tries to do, is provide the hope that tells us that we got to keep trying.

And so I thank you gentlemen so very much.

And I thank you, Mr. Chairman, again, for this hearing.

And I believe that we are on the right track, and that the American people will respond and life does not have to be, for individuals who are incarcerated, one dark, gloomy picture.

So I thank you.

Mr. GEORGE WILLIAMS. Thank you, sir.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you. As we move forward—and it was important that we get the year started out right in this 2-year session of Congress—a couple of thoughts here at the end: One is, it's very easy to be critical of those who commit crimes, and that those of us who haven't been to jail, it's hard—and since the population that hasn't had to vote the tax money with which to do this.

In communicating, I have been trying to think of analogies of every January, I and most Americans commit to lose weight. And yet, we don't; that we fail. And yet we criticize those, and they even have physical addictions, without any of the resources that we have to follow through, if they fail in what their goal is.

And how to get in a way that the average person can understand the difficulty without being condemning. Because at root, I believe, as Mr. Williams suggested and others, that the root cause is sin. And that we are in a constant battle, and that those of us who have extra resources with which to battle it are blessed.

And then the question comes, how do we reach out to those who don't have those and what is our obligation to do so and what is the individual's obligation then to change because, there is accountability there, too.

And trying to communicate this message is of critical importance as we move through this. Really, what are three stages for those who follow this bill and are going to be active and trying to promote this?

As Pat knows, from being in the Assembly, there's really three ways to do this. One is the bill directly, which is an authorizing bill that says this is allowed to fund these types of programs, and it's—Congressman Davis has a housing bill that we have supported before, and that is arguably the most difficult, because you have to go through the House, you have to go through the Senate, and the President has to reconcile and support it, too.

The second thing is that, in the appropriations process, to try to get little pieces here and there where we fund things in the appropriations process that are parts of the overall bill, and the general question of prison re-entry.

And the third is through the executive branch where they make decisions every day on how to allocate funding.

For example, in my home area in Ft. Wayne, IN, which is a city of 200,000, not as big as most of the cities you are dealing with for the most part today, the fact is that the Justice Department has a re-entry program because in Ft. Wayne—which has been bragging now for 5 years that they have had these great crime reductions. Now their people or many could go out of prison, 3,000 of them, in some neighborhoods that only have 10,000 people in front of them.

Now what happens, you know, the housing situation is stressed. The job situation is stressed. There aren't jobs in that section of the city that other sections of the city say, why should they come back there?

It is a problem all across America, as we as politicians and government leaders have bragged about the government reduction in crime. Many of those sentences were 3, 5, 7 years, and now we have the re-entry questions that we are going to have to deal with this, or what we have bragged about and run on, in areas outside the urban areas as well as inside the urban areas we are faced with. So I think there are multiple ways to try to tackle this.

I wanted to make sure that we started right at the beginning of the 2-year term to try to raise this, and you have helped. I would also like if you can work with Brandon Lerch on our staff, for example, in the Ready-to-Work Program, to identify youth listed in your testimony, all these different sites across the country, to give us a little more feedback in what government funds were in, how that has worked in the capacity building, so we can see. And if you have any data, any of the rest of you.

Mr. GEORGE WILLIAMS. OK.

Mr. SOUDER. In Chicago and Detroit, and I know Justice Fellowship can do that, too.

So as we move into this hearing record, as it moves into the different authorizing committees, that we can try to, whether it's through floor statements, through different meetings, that we bring people in. The more information we have, the better armed we will be to try to tackle these difficult questions.

This committee does authorizing and oversight on drug policy, so there are a number of things here—for example in the treatment program, when I have talked to—when I say about the appropriations process, Chairman Wolf and I have talked to Commerce, State and Justice Appropriations about, should drug treatment be more precisely targeted in a higher percentage toward prisons?

Because if we can't get to it early on, or if, in fact, it becomes a greater problem in prison or they are introduced to it in prison, it is a huge question, how do we best target these funds?

So any kind of information you can give us for this hearing record will not only be in the official record, but then we can use it as we debate it in multiple forms, including additional hearings in this subcommittee.

Would any of you like to make any closing comments?

Mr. DAVIE. I would, Mr. Chairman.

You asked earlier sort of what could Congress do. And I would like to suggest that one of the areas where we have not paid enough attention to garnering resources and partnerships is with the philanthropic community.

I mentioned the Ford Foundation and the Annie E. Casey Foundation in my testimony. I used to work for Ford. So I know that world pretty well, but I think if Congress and the President were to reach out to the heads of the major foundations and suggest they could play a role in this area, a bigger role as well in terms of helping to support local community and faith-based organizations, in the delivery of these services, you would find a good partner there. But I think they need to cover—I think if the legislation somehow required a match from philanthropic and private sources in the implementation of these programs, that would be another sort of incentive and method to get the philanthropic community involved. There are billions and billions of dollars there, and this is an issue that the philanthropic community has not paid a lot of attention to.

I, frankly, think they are scared of it in some ways for obvious reasons. But with the support and cover of government, in pursuing this as a national policy and a national issue, I do think a number of those philanthropic institutions will come along.

I would just encourage you—if you see your way so clear—to reach out to that community, because I think they can be a valuable resource.

Mr. SOUDER. We will followup directly on that question. If I can make an editorial comment here that, as we work this through—the President's faith-based initiative, when he first took office, somehow became mostly focused on the public funding portion that was going to go to faith-based. It really had multiple pieces, including capacity building, which we talked about. How do we get people setting up 501c3s? How do we train them in accounting methods

so they can have credibility when they go to philanthropic institutions, and then the tax credit, which would give incentive to individuals when they give these 501c3s and to philanthropic organizations? The public fight became over the funding portion. And we kind of lost the other two, where we might have been able to move forward.

Steve Goldsmith was originally hired. And as he has pointed out repeatedly, there's far more dollars in the philanthropic area right now than there are in government. Somehow this got second, the back burner. Trying to reconstruct some of how that happened is important as we move forward.

Second, one of the things that appeared to have happened is that the philanthropic organizations themselves backed away—if government didn't put the money in, because government money was like a good-housekeeping seal, that we believe this group is good.

And so much like what is happening in pharmaceutical prices and Medicare is, as we were trying to go cheap on the drug prices, that every private insurance company standard emulated the government price. And if the philanthropic organizations merely mimic what we do, we are right back to the first place.

So as we move multiple faith-based pieces through, which we will probably be starting within 4 weeks, everything from welfare reform, social services block grant and other types of things, in addition to the regular bill and regular implementation, we will try to figure out how to do that, with suggestions of specifically how to do that, with regional conferences where the government brings philanthropic organizations in and lets groups come to present that. That was one of the things that was raised to me. We do this, for example, in small business centers around the United States.

We have small business centers where the secretary is shared. The phone lines are shared. The fax machines are shared. Students can come and volunteer. Could that be done in a social services way? And would philanthropic organizations pay for some of that, which would then build the capacity of small organizations, much who have no idea to whom you fill out a grant—fill out a grant to the Federal Government or a philanthropic organization, don't have time to hire somebody even to figure out the bid process of a small foundation, let alone the Federal Government when you don't know which 10 days it will be in the middle of the month and have some inside information.

This, on the surface, sounds really good, but how to implement it in some very practical things. They have done some of this around the country. Clearly, the Faith-based Office is trying to figure out how to do it. But we have missed this philanthropic piece, and the question is, how to jar them. There's lots of money there, and you are absolutely right, but it's a challenge. So any input you have on that.

Mr. TONEY. Just one statement to you, that position has power, and each person who sits on this committee and everyone who serves in Congress and across the board, just by you taking notice of this and just by taking visits, you have the power to make a difference. One man can make a difference.

Warden Cain is just one man. He has only had 10 years in the maximum security prison, the bloodiest prison in America. Today,

it's the safest. That's one man in the right position. Government officials have power. Put that one man in the right places in the prisons.

Education is powerful. We have seminaries across the United States. Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. They are a prestigious university. There are other universities that are ready to take on the process of putting education within the prison system, no tax dollars, supported by the Church of America. So position has power, and I thank you for what you are doing; 88 years, do I agree with that. No, I do not.

There is one man we have at Angola, Bishop Eugene Tannerhill, he is 70 years old, he has been behind bars for 50 years. Would he be a detriment to society? No, sir. I would love for him to be my next-door neighbor.

There are many guys within our system. We can't help the 88 years. We just have to do the best we can with where we are, and that's what we have done in regards to the caskets and those things being done.

That means a lot to Eugene Tannerhill, who has no one to be his emergency contact and to pick his body up when he dies. That means a lot to him, that he will have a decent burial, that he will have grace and dignity in those last days of his life. That means a lot to him.

You would only have to be in their position to see the hope these guys have; hope with no hope; 88 years alive, but they still have hope. And they have changed their culture. And the society that they live in is a great world, even within the walls of a prison. But you have power, and thank you for the power that you are using today to change our prisons in America.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

Mr. JOSEPH WILLIAMS. I would say that I agree with others who have testified that there is a movement, re-entry and after-care. It's a very young movement, and it reminds me in many ways of the yearly substance-abuse treatment movement that started back in the 1960's, when people were looking at, you know, the validity of funding substance-abuse treatment.

And I think one of the major things that occurred in that movement was leadership of those who had formerly been addicted to drugs and alcohol. And somehow, I think, if a way could be found to encourage the leadership of those who have served time in prison and have successfully made that transition and assure that they have a prominent place in this movement, I think that is the best way to perpetuate it years into the future.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you all very much for your testimony and participating in this hearing. We look forward to having a continuing dialog with you.

Thank you, Congressman Davis, again for your leadership.

With that, the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:30 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

[Additional information submitted for the hearing record follows:]

Comprehensive Reentry Strategy for Adults in the District of Columbia

June 12, 2003

Final Report

Final Report, 6/12/2003

Comprehensive Reentry Strategy for Adults in the District of Columbia: Executive Summary

The goal of the *Comprehensive Reentry Strategy for Adults in the District of Columbia* is to provide a detailed, long-range plan for an effective continuum of reentry services for DC offenders during incarceration, transition from incarceration to the community, and life in the community during and after supervision. In addition, the strategy proposes an agenda for reentry service provider quality assurance, community education about the relationship between public safety and effective reentry, and legislative priorities.

The core of the strategy is the development of an assessment-driven reentry plan tailored to each offender's needs, strengths, and aspirations. The plan should remain with an offender through the three phases of reentry: institutionally based programs, transitional services, and community reintegration.

Background

- On July 24, 2001, CSOSA and the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice hosted a citywide Reentry Symposium at the Washington Council of Governments. The event served to identify issues and gaps in reentry services.

- On December 5, 2001, CSOSA and the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice hosted a Reentry Service Provider Forum at the Wilson Building. The forum gave an opportunity for community-based service providers to address city and federal officials about their organization's history of services, successes, and value to the offender reintegration process in the District of Columbia.

- Between December 2001 and April 2002, a group of community advocates, community-based service providers, and government agency representatives worked together to craft a comprehensive reentry strategy for adult offenders returning from incarceration to the District of Columbia community. The primary participants in this process included:

  - Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA),
  - Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice (DMPSJ),
  - Office of the Corrections Trustee,
  - DC Prisoners Legal Services Project,
  - DC Department of Corrections (DCDC),
  - DC Department of Mental Health (DMH), and
  - Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP).

The Reentry Process should be available to all offenders returning from some form of incarceration to the community. A summary of key recommendations is provided below.

Pre-Release Planning and Case Management

- Continue the BOP's, DCDC's, and CSOSA's efforts to create a seamless assessment and case-planning system that incorporates individual needs and offenders' interests and aspirations.
- Form a Reentry Team to develop, execute, and adjust case plans, accordingly, based on an ex-offender's progress toward the development of the skill-sets necessary for law-abiding, sustained, independent living in the community.
- Develop short-term "reentry packages," consisting of needed medication, clothing, and other tangible resources to support offenders in the first sixty days following release.
- Complete referrals for access to housing, substance abuse, mental health, education, and job training prior to release to the community.

Housing

- Start the application process to place a family member's name on a public housing lease during incarceration.
- Encourage offenders to save in-prison and work release wages in protected interest-bearing accounts to assist with post-release expenses.
- Expand short and long-term transitional housing options for individual ex-offenders and ex-offenders with families.

Education and Employment

- Increase the number of offenders who receive education and employment screening and begin programs during incarceration.
- Enlist the Greater Washington Board of Trade, the DC Chamber of Commerce, or other business groups to encourage employers to create career opportunities for reentrants.
- Expand the capacity of the existing educational and employment support network for ex-offenders, regardless of whether they are under supervision.

Substance Abuse Treatment

- Encourage awareness among judges, attorneys, inmates, and inmates' families about the eligibility requirements and enrollment process for the BOP's Residential Drug Abuse Treatment Program (RDAP).

- Establish a Reentry and Sanctions Center operated by CSOSA to screen and assess newly released offenders with extensive criminal and substance abuse histories in preparation for intensive outpatient treatment or residential treatment.

Mental Health Treatment

- Establish a comprehensive mental health screening system to ensure that individuals needing mental health services have access to needed medication and/or referrals for placement in appropriate services immediately upon release.

Identification and Benefits

- Provide identification and appropriate benefits prior to release to expedite placement of offenders into treatment programs and to ease the process of obtaining employment.

- Complete applications for eligible offenders to enroll in DC Healthcare Alliance Program prior to release.

Family & Community Support

- Utilize teleconference or other relevant technology to enable inmates to maintain contact with family members during incarceration.

- Create a network of successful ex-offenders to educate communities and support current ex-offenders in earlier stages of the reentry process.

- Expand the number and range of community-based wrap-around services with linkages to housing, substance abuse, personal and mental health, educational, and vocational resources to execute the reentry plan and to help offenders meet individual needs after formal community supervision ends.

Comprehensive Reentry Strategy for Adults in the District of Columbia

Reentry is the process through which incarcerated individuals come home and, if successful, stay home. Success is an arduous process for most individuals making the transition from the controlled, highly structured environment of jail or prison. The challenge of overcoming the stigma of being an "ex-offender,"[1] reconnecting with family, establishing stable housing, finding quality employment, and resisting alcohol or other drugs immediately confront and sometimes overwhelm the reentrant. Learning to make good decisions, avoiding the wrong people, and establishing relationships with persons who exert a positive influence over returning prisoners requires a value set and decision-making skills that many re-entrants may not have possessed or utilized prior to incarceration. Returning men and women without adequate skill and value sets may resort to illegitimate means of survival. Given the complex array of values, habits, and decision-making skills that an individual will need to be successful, a model reentry system needs to begin in prison or jail and continue uninterrupted, as a person is released to the community, with or without supervision. The implementation of a continuum of reentry services requires coordination among corrections agencies, community corrections agencies, and community-based service providers.

System Overview

The recommendations of this plan represent the minimum requirements for a comprehensive reentry strategy in the District of Columbia. The core of the strategy is the development of an assessment-driven reentry plan tailored to each offender's needs, strengths, and aspirations. The plan should remain with an offender through the three phases of reentry: institutionally based programs, transitional services, and community reintegration.

Strategy details are presented in the context of the three phases followed by a presentation of quality assurance, community education, and recommendations for legislative or policy change. Where appropriate, the strategy contains specific recommendations to address planning and case management, housing, education and employment, substance abuse, mental health, and family and community support.

The Reentry Process should be available to all offenders returning from some form of incarceration to the community. Three sub-groups comprise the DC Reentry population.

- Offenders released from Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facilities located across the country to community supervision provided by the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) or US Probation.
- Reentrants with no community supervision, including misdemeanants or pretrial detainees released by the District of Columbia Department of Corrections (DCDC) or felons released by BOP owing no additional sentence time.
- Split-sentence probationers released by DCDC to CSOSA supervision.

The challenges of working with this population as a whole are complex given the dispersion of inmates and the range of needs they are likely to present.

- Many inmates are housed at facilities located far away from the District of Columbia. The National Capital Self-government Improvement Act of 1997 (Revitalization Act, [P.L. 105-33]) transferred sentenced felons from DCDC to BOP custody. As of December 31, 2002, 63 percent of 6,152 DC inmates were housed in BOP facilities in South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and New Jersey. The remaining inmates were placed in 25 states across the country. In 1997, BOP and the DC government entered a Memorandum of Understanding stipulating that District men and women would be housed in federal facilities within a 500-mile radius of the city.
- Sixteen percent of individuals on parole supervision in the community for at least 6 months indicated that they had moved at least three times or had lived in a shelter within the past year (CSOSA, 2002). In 1999, eleven percent of arrestees in the District report their residence as a shelter or no fixed residence (ADAM, 2001).
- Seventy percent of returning offenders have a history of substance abuse (Taxman, Kubu, DeStefano, Borus, and Thompson, 1999).
- The average literacy level is 7th grade (Taxman, et al., 1999).
- Sixty-one percent of the supervised population reported employment as of September 30, 2002 (CSOSA, 2003).
- In June 2000, DCDC provided mental health therapy or counseling to 21 percent of its population. Nationally, 13 percent of state prisoners received therapy or counseling (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001).
- In 1999, eight percent of men and twenty-two percent of women housed by DCDC were HIV positive (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001).

Given that the typical parolee in the District has on average 9.2 adult arrests and 4.5 convictions (Taxman, et al., 1999), addressing each offender's combination of needs is necessary to slow the cycle of criminality and improve public safety in the District. Men and women who fail to receive the support and encouragement to address needs during incarceration, transition, or after release will face an uphill climb to avoid a return to behaviors that resulted in previous incarceration. Sustainable employment will be harder to achieve for individuals who do not have a GED or diploma. These men and women and their families will continue to face limited housing opportunities, increased stress within the family, an inability to provide for their children, and a reliance on food stamps or other assistance programs. Out of frustration, they may feel that they need to return to criminal activity to obtain additional funds.

The citywide reentry strategy represents the recommendations of a collection of criminal justice agency professionals, non-governmental service providers and advocates, and ex-offenders to improve the offender reentry process through the application of best

practices and improved coordination among government and community-based service providers.

Phase I. Institutionally Based Programs: Preparation for Release and Discharge Planning during Incarceration

I-A. *Pre-Release Planning & Case Management*

1. Emphasize collaboration and comprehensive data sharing among correctional and community correctional personnel to conduct case planning prior to release. An effective assessment and pre-release planning system combines offenders' personal goals with an objective assessment of offenders' risk and needs factors that are based on statistically verifiable predictors of recidivism (Gendreau, Little, and Goggin, 1996; Andrews and Bonta, 1994; Andrews, 1994).

2. Convene a Reentry Team for each offender upon entrance to the BOP and the DCDC. A Reentry Team comprised of the offender, a BOP or DCDC case manager, and, if available, a family member or mentor should form and support the development of an individualized Reentry Plan prior to an inmate's transition from prison to the community. In situations in which DCDC houses the inmate, the Reentry Team should have a plan in place no later than 30 days after entrance. Currently, BOP case managers begin Reentry Planning for offenders when they enter BOP facilities. Until recently, direct collaboration between BOP case managers and CSOSA's Community Supervision Officers (CSO's) has been limited to the period of Community Corrections Center (CCC) transition. Pre-release offenders who are the beneficiaries of this collaboration are limited to only those offenders eligible for CCC transition.[2] Models of earlier collaboration between the BOP and CSOSA for reentry planning are developing. For example:

- In Spring 2003, CSOSA will continue discussions with the operators of the Rivers Correctional Facility in Winton, NC, a BOP contract facility that houses approximately 1,000 DC Code offenders, to consider a Pre-release Assessment and Reentry Team Demonstration Project. In the proposed demonstration, the Reentry Team would develop case plans for 15 offenders and match them with mentors through the CSOSA/Faith Community Partnership.
- BOP has launched a pilot initiative, the Inmate Skills Development Plan, at six locations. The plan emphasizes improved needs assessment, needs-based program placement, and uninterrupted service delivery in critical needs areas while offenders transition from prison to the community.

3. Encourage the DCDC inmates (sentenced misdemeanants, pretrial detainees, or parole violators) to visit a DC Department of Employment Services One-Stop Career Center immediately upon release. Each of the nine, neighborhood-based One-Stop Career Centers can provide valuable resources on finding a good job, locating suitable education or training programs creating effective resumes and cover letters, planning personal finance, and finding benefits for which reentrants may be eligible. DCDC, on its own or in collaboration with a community-based organization, needs to create a brief

resource pamphlet that provides address and contact information about the One-Stop shops, or develop an additional resource pamphlet to circulate among its inmate population, emphasizing how to access Washington area resources for housing, healthcare, substance abuse and mental health services, education and employment programs, and other resources. DCDC will make the material part of the orientation package received by each system entrant. DCDC should also take responsibility for developing the booklet in English, Spanish, and video or another appropriate format to make the information available for individuals with poor literacy skills or visual impairment.

4. Create a reentry plan that addresses critical areas of needs and that stays with a person through incarceration, community supervision (if any), and independent life in the community. The Reentry Team will develop a reentry plan to target and prioritize necessary interventions that will enable offenders to work toward personal goals for sustained independent living, utilize their individual strengths, and address risk factors and needs predictive of recidivism. The plan should focus on the following areas:

- Housing
- Education and Employment
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Health
- Identification and Benefits
- Life Skills
- Family and Community Support

5. Ensure that the Reentry Plan for women is gender specific. The path to criminality for women is often different than it is for men. For many women criminal involvement is a matter of survival, poverty, and or substance abuse. Many incarcerated women became involved in property crime, prostitution, and or drug use after trying to escape physical or sexual abuse perpetrated by a family member or intimate associate. Others are entrapped in domestic violence situations in which their partners abuse them if they fail to provide them with drugs. In many of these cases, abused women exchange sex for a place to stay. Since the majority of women in the criminal justice system are mothers, incarceration places an additional level of burden on women that often manifests itself in co-occurring mental health and substance abuse problems. Developing reentry plans and programs that are sensitive to these realities are important to putting women in a position where they can make positive life changes.

6. Improve life skills by encouraging behavioral change and improved decision-making while addressing tangible needs for housing, personal and mental health care, substance abuse, education and employment, or other skill sets. Gendreau, Little, and Goggin (1996) maintain, "The design of effective offender treatment programs is highly dependent on knowledge of the predictors of recidivism." Because attitude, peer association, personal belief systems, and family relationships are among the greatest predictors of criminal risk, interventions need to promote behavioral change while addressing various areas of need or skill development (Andrews and Bonta, 1994; Gaes and Kendig, 2002).