

# JUSTICE CENTER

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

## Second Chance Act Talking Points

- Passing Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support, the Second Chance Act was signed into law in April 2008. The bill outlines a common sense, evidence-based approach to reducing crime and improving public safety by supporting reentry programs and policies. Second Chance grant recipients include
  - State or local government agencies,
  - Tribal governments, and
  - Nonprofit agencies.
- Since October 2009, over 250 local, state, and tribal government agencies and nonprofit organizations from 47 states have received Second Chance awards.
  - 17 percent (43 grantees) serve youth involved in the justice system.
  - 83 percent (210 grantees) serve adults involved in the justice system.
- Second Chance-funded programs have made a significant impact in jurisdictions throughout the country. However, with the number of people returning from prison and jail increasing, the need for federal funding for reentry grant programs is greater now than ever before.
  - Federal and state corrections facilities held over 1.6 million prisoners at the end of 2009 — approximately one of every 199 U.S. residents.<sup>1</sup>
  - At least 95 percent of state prisoners will be released back to their communities.<sup>2</sup> They return with complex health, education, housing and other needs—which, if not addressed—can increase their likelihood of returning to prison.
  - Each year, more than 700,000 individuals are released from state and federal prisons.<sup>3</sup> Another nine million are released from local jails.<sup>4</sup>
  - More than 5 million individuals were on probation or parole at the end of 2009.<sup>5</sup>
  - If current trajectories continue, state and federal prisons will grow by 13 percent by 2013, adding an additional 192,000 prisoners at a cost of \$27.5 billion.<sup>6</sup>
- The Second Chance Act is making a vital contribution to public safety.
  - Recent research demonstrates that pre-and post-release services can help individuals live healthier, more productive lives, and has a direct impact on the likelihood of them reoffending.
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- **Please support continued funding for the Second Chance Act.**

<sup>1</sup> Sabol, W. & H.C. West. *Prisoners in 2009*. NCJ 231675. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2010. [bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/p09.pdf](http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/p09.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Hughes, T. & D.J. Wilson. *Reentry Trends in the United States*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2002. [bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/reentry.pdf](http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/reentry.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> West, H.C., W. Sabol, & M. Cooper. *Prisoners in 2008*. NCJ 228417. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009. <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/p08.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Beck, A.J. *The Importance of Successful Reentry to Jail Population Growth*. Presented at the Urban Institute's Jail Reentry Roundtable, June 27, 2006. [http://nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/documents/0000/1059/Reentry\\_Brief.pdf](http://nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/documents/0000/1059/Reentry_Brief.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Glaze, L.E. & T.P. Bonczar. *Probation and Parole in the United States, 2009*. NCJ 231674. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2010. [bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/ppus09.pdf](http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/ppus09.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Public Safety Performance Project, *Public Safety, Public Spending: Forecasting America's Prison Population 2007-2011*. (Washington, D.C.: Public Safety Performance Project, The Pew Charitable Trusts, February 2007).