

Supportive Quotes from Advocacy Organizations

H.R. 2875, The Law Enforcement, Trust and Integrity Act of 2015

"The federal government has an important role to play in restoring public safety and building trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve, so we are pleased to see the introduction of legislation like the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act. We must promote systemic police reform and a police culture that guarantees everyone's civil liberties and civil rights."

-Kanya Bennett, ACLU

"With the growing number of incidents involving police excessive or lethal use of force, we are eager to see Congress pass legislation that promotes fair and responsible policing," said Monique Dixon, senior policy counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. "The Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act is a good start. The bill increases funding to the Justice Department to address police misconduct, and requires federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to report demographic data to the Attorney General on traffic and pedestrian stops, and use of deadly force by or against police officers."

-Monique Dixon, NAACP LDF

"Over the last year we've seen a growing movement to address policing practices that have a disproportionate impact on low-income communities, communities of color, and African Americans in particular. These practices, like discriminatory profiling, excessive use of force, and both explicit and implicit racial bias in law enforcement, have framed the national debate around police reform and prompted a national conversation about improving accountability and transparency in policing," said Nancy Zirkin, executive vice president for The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. "It's time for Congress to pass commonsense legislation to address these issues, and the Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act is a good first step. The bill would address police misconduct by increasing funding for training and require state and local law enforcement to collect disaggregated data on traffic and pedestrian stops and use of deadly force by or against police officers."

-Sakira Cook, The Leadership Conference

Youth Incarceration Reform Package

"Two days ago, the White House Office of Pardons politely refused our request for President Obama to commute the sentences of all nonviolent federally convicted persons. We do not accept that response as legitimate because it is unjust and the the American people no longer accept the legitimacy of mass incarceration.

Exodus Foundation.org has been recognized locally and nationally for its work in black male achievement mentoring formerly incarcerated men. Ninety percent of our mentees have remained out of jail or prison. With adequate support, people can transform their lives and reach their potential. Many of our mentees entered prison as teenagers and remained in the adult system for far too long serving sentences that did not fit their crime.

The trail blazing Congresswoman Sheila Jackson-Lee and Congressman John Conyers offer our nation a remarkable opportunity to correct a national disgrace--the torture of American children in our nation's adult prisons. We have come to the Capitol to offer our support and alliance for their legislation. We urge Congress to support each provision. We also urge President Obama to commute the sentences of 40,000 people in federal prison for nonviolent offenses. Release them with housing, transportation and education vouchers.

Citizens such as Kevin Washington who is serving a life sentence for possessing less than 3oz of cocaine need to be let go now. This network of prison plantations is a national disgrace. We owe it to Kalief Browder, his family and thousands of other families to dismantle them and replace them with restorative justice.

Exodus Foundation.org is a Christian faith based charity. Its vision is to create a more humane and sane justice system where punishment as the solution to crime is replaced by restorative justice. Mission: Stop the Flow of African-Americans to prison." **-Dr. Madeline McClenney-Sadler, The Exodus Foundation**

"If we truly care about stopping mass incarceration, we must end it for the weakest most vulnerable members of our society - our kids. The RAISE Act is compassionate legislation designed to divert at risk youth from a life of institutionalization and provide mentorship and service opportunities to help change the trajectory of their lives."

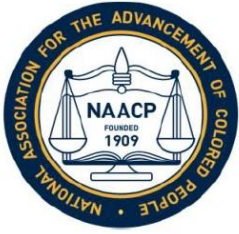
-Jennifer Bellamy, ACLU

"The New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good enthusiastically stands with the sponsors of these legislative initiatives to reform policing and youth incarceration," according to Dr. Richard Cizik, President of the Organization. "These bills rest upon solid biblical principles of restorative justice. To the extent that people of faith have given support to any notion of retributive justice, an eye for an eye, we have forgotten our own unique description as people of the Gospel. The Word of God teaches reconciliation, and thus true justice not revenge. These bills move us toward true reconciliation, and thus much closer to divine justice," Cizik stated.

-Dr. Richard Cizik, The New Evangelical Partnership for the Common Good

"Today we applaud the introduction of Kalief's Law, which addresses issues of pretrial injustice faced by juveniles detained in adult facilities. While there are a number of important steps that must be taken to ensure our systems are safe, fair and effective for both juveniles and adults, Kalief's Law moves us in a positive direction and honors the memory of Kalief Browder."

-Cherise Fanno Burdeen, Pretrial Justice Institute



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NAACP STRONGLY SUPPORTS CONGRESSMAN JOHN CONYERS, JR. AND CONGRESSWOMAN SHEILA JACKSON LEE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO MAKE OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM MORE FAIR AND HUMANE

July 22, 2015 – The NAACP, our nation’s oldest, largest, and most widely-recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization, today strongly endorsed legislation introduced by Congressman John Conyers (MI) and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (TX) which will help make our nation’s criminal justice system smarter, more fair and humane, including where our children are involved.

“Together, these proposals address a serious problem which is disproportionate in the communities served and represented by the NAACP: too many of our youth are involved in the criminal justice system, and too often the results are harmful and even fatal” said Hilary Shelton, the Director of the NAACP Washington Bureau and the Senior Vice President for Policy and Advocacy.

“The Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act, H.R. 2875, which was introduced by Congressman Conyers instills a sense of fairness and uniformity – it will help set standards for the use of force and make sure that law enforcement officials are held accountable for treating everyone equally and humanely by the men and women who are hired to protect and serve our neighborhoods” Director Shelton continued. “The legislation being introduced by Congresswoman Jackson Lee today targets specific issues which affect children involved in our criminal justice system – problems which affect a disproportionate number of African American youth. Her bills will ensure that judges have more flexibility and judicial discretion when sentencing non-violent offenders; that youth are treated to a speedy trial; that they are not relegated to the proven dangers of solitary confinement, and that their records, particularly those of non-violent offenders are expunged or sealed. These new bills help advance the comprehensive changes needed in our juvenile justice system, and works well with the NAACP-supported Youth Promise Act, which was introduced by Congressman Bobby Scott (VA).”

Director Shelton concluded his remarks by saying “I would like to personally thank Congressman Conyers and Congresswoman Jackson Lee for their vision and courage in drafting and introducing these essential bills. The sad truth is, the color of your skin greatly affects how you are treated by law enforcement in our nation today. These crucial bills will help level the playing field, and assure decent, humane treatment for all Americans who make mistakes and seek the opportunity to grow, learn from their errors, and contribute to the reality of a “more perfect union.”