



HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE - 114th Congress

Key Provisions of the Sentencing Reform Act of 2015

- **Reforms Mandatory Minimums for Drug Offenses:**
 - Reduces the three-strike mandatory life sentence to 25 years and the two-strike sentence from 20 to 15 years.
 - Applies these sentencing reductions retroactively, except for offenders who have prior serious violent felony convictions that resulted in a prison sentence of greater than 13 months.
 - Allows drug sentences to be enhanced based upon prior convictions for serious violent felonies.
 - Includes a sentencing enhancement for trafficking in Fentanyl, a highly addictive and deadly drug.

- **Broadens the Existing Safety Valve and Creates a Second Safety Valve:**
 - Expands the existing drug “safety valve” to offenders with prior misdemeanor convictions but excludes offenders with prior felonies, or prior violent or drug trafficking convictions.
 - Permits courts to find that a defendant’s prior offenses substantially overstate the defendant’s criminal history and danger of recidivism.
 - Creates a second safety valve that allows judges to sentence certain offenders below the 10-year mandatory minimum.

- **Reforms Sentences for Certain Firearms Offenses:**
 - Expands the enhanced penalties for violent firearms offenders to those with prior firearm convictions.
 - Raises the statutory maximum for unlawful possession of firearms but lowers the enhanced mandatory minimum sentences for repeat offenders.
 - Revises the language regarding second or subsequent convictions for certain firearms offenses.
 - Applies the second or subsequent fix retroactively and applies the sentencing reductions retroactively, except for offenders who have prior serious violent felony convictions (as defined in the bill).

- **Applies the Fair Sentencing Act Retroactively**
 - Allows FSA retroactivity for offenders who have never received a reduction, or for those who were ineligible because they were sentenced at the mandatory minimum.