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Tell Your Members of Congress: Support the Smarter Sentencing Act

As one of our more than 6.9 million FreedomWorks members nationwide, I urge you to contact your representative and senators today and ask them to support the Smarter Sentencing Act and to co-sponsor the bill if they have not already done so. Introduced by Senators Mike Lee (R-Utah) and Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) in the Senate (S. 502) and by Congressmen Raúl Labrador (R-Id.) and Bobby Scott (D-Va.) in the House (H.R. 920), the Smarter Sentencing Act would “focus limited federal resources on the most serious offenders.”

Federal law currently requires a mandatory minimum sentence of five years for a first time, non-violent drug offense, regardless of the individual circumstances of the crime and of the offender.

Our prison system is overtaxed and overcrowded—the United States has the highest incarceration rate in the developed world. Given finite resources, it is important that we use our prison space wisely and appropriately. A justice system that leaves violent criminals on the street because all the jail cells are taken up by non-violent minor offenders is one that is not working, and not protecting the lives and property of the innocent as intended.

The Smarter Sentencing Act would reduce mandatory minimums for minor, non-violent drug offenders—from 5 years to 2 years, 10 years to 5 years, 20 years to 10 years, and mandatory life to minimum 25 years. It does not eliminate mandatory minimums—it just reduces them. It also does not reduce statutory maximums or affect statutory enhancements that apply to violent offenders or those who use firearms.

According to the Justice Department, this kind of sentencing reform would save nearly \$24 billion taxpayer dollars over the next 20 years, as resources are targeted more efficiently towards keeping the worst offenders off the street.

Judges should be allowed to do their jobs and have more flexibility when dealing with non-violent offenders. I hope you’ll contact your senators and representative and urge them to support and co-sponsor the Smarter Sentencing Act, S. 502 and H.R. 920.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Kibbe', with a stylized, cursive script.

Matt Kibbe
President & CEO,
FreedomWorks