



Ohio Practitioners' Network
for Fathers and Families

RE-ENTRY POLICY UPDATE

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President Bush Signs HR 1593, the Second Chance Act of 2007, April 9, 2008

on taxpayers, it deprives our labor force of productive workers, and it deprives families of their daughters and sons, and husbands and wives, and moms and dads.

Our government has a responsibility to help prisoners to return as contributing members of their community. But this does not mean that the government has all the answers. Some of the most important work to help ex-convicts is done outside of Washington, D.C., in faith-based communities and community-based groups. It's done on streets and small town community centers. It's done in churches and synagogues and temples and mosques.

I like to call the folks who are engaged in this compassionate work, "members of the armies of compassion." They help addicts and users break the chains of addiction. They help former prisoners find a ride to work and a meal to eat and place to stay. These men and women are answering the call to love their neighbors as they'd like to be loved themselves. And in the process, they're helping prisoners replace anger and suffering and despair with faith and hope and love.

The bill I'm signing today, the

Second Chance Act of 2007, will build on work to help prisoners reclaim their lives. In other words, it basically says: We're standing with you, not against you.

First, the act will authorize important parts of the administration's Prison Re-entry Initiative. The goal of this initiative is to help America's prisoners by expanding job training and placement services, improving their ability to find transitional housing, and helping newly released prisoners get mentoring, including from faith-based groups.

The past three years, congressional appropriations have supported the work in 20 states through a series of pilot programs awarded to community and faith-based organizations by the U.S. Department of Labor. The early efforts have fielded promising results. In the first two years of the program, more than 12,800 offenders have enrolled in the prisoner re-entry program. More 7,900 have been placed in jobs. Only 18 percent of those enrolled in the program have been arrested again within a year -- that's less than half the national average. We like to measure results, and the results of these

pilot programs are very encouraging.

With the legislation I'll sign today, Congress has recognized the success of this good policy, and I thank them for their good work. Secondly, the act will support the Justice Department's ongoing work to help our nation's prisoners. This bill will help state and local governments, and Indian tribes, and non-profit groups implement programs that will improve the prisoner re-entry process.

These programs will provide further -- former prisoners with essential services, like housing and medical care. It will help develop prisoner drug treatment programs; support prisoner mentoring initiatives. It will support family counseling and other services to help prisoners re-establish their place in the community.

In both these ways, the Second Chance Act will live up to its name; will help ensure that where the prisoner's spirit is willing, the community's resources are available. It will help our armies of compassion use their healing touch so lost souls can rediscover their dignity and sense of purpose.

And now it is my honor to sign this important piece of legislation. May God bless the country, and may God bless those who are trying to help.

Excerpts From The President's Signing Message:

Thanks for coming. I'm about to sign a piece of legislation that will help give prisoners across America a second chance for a better life. This bill is going to support the caring men and women who help America's prisoners find renewal and hope.

The country was built on the belief that each human being has limitless potential and worth. Everybody matters. We believe that even those who have struggled with a dark past can find brighter days ahead. One way we act on that belief is by helping former prisoners who've paid for their crimes -- we help them build new lives as productive members of our society.

The work of redemption reflects our values. It also reflects our national interests. Each year, approximately 650,000 prisoners are released from jail. Unfortunately, an estimated two-thirds of them are rearrested within three years. The high recidivism rate places a huge financial burden

Governor Strickland Signs HB 113 into Law

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On Tuesday March 25th, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Director Terry Collins and other DRC staff attended a bill signing ceremony where Governor Strickland signed into law House Bill 113 sponsored by Representatives John White and Clayton Luckie.

The legislation codifies basic tenets of the Correctional Faith Based Initiatives Taskforce which was established by the legislature in Amended Substi-

tute House Bill 66.

The bill encourages faith based and volunteer reentry services such as counseling, housing, job placement and money management to be provided in DRC/DYS institutions. The bill also requires both departments to provide via its websites contact information to associations, groups, and organizations who may want to become involved in reentry services.



The bill will become effective on June 23, 2008.

HB 113 Signing Ceremony