



Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice

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July 18, 2013

Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of the Center for Juvenile and Criminal Justice, I write in strong support of H.R. 1318, the Youth PROMISE Act, which will help improve the lives of young people who are exposed to violence. The bill implements best practices and research-driven approaches to reduce gang violence and youth crime.

The Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice (CJCJ) is a private non-profit organization that promotes balanced and humane criminal justice policies to reduce incarceration and foster long-term public safety in California. CJCJ's mission is pursued through the development of model programs, technical assistance, and policy analysis.

CJCJ has long supported serving at-risk youth with a continuum of evidence-based prevention and intervention programs, rather than punitive measures like incarceration. The model programs at CJCJ, which provide alternatives to incarceration for justice-involved youth, demonstrate that such an approach is more effective, cost-efficient, and humane than incarceration, giving young people a true opportunity to lead healthy and successful lives. The Youth PROMISE Act will support programs like these, relying on recommendations of best practices from crime policy makers, researchers, practitioners, analysts, and law enforcement officials from around the nation.

The Youth PROMISE Act supports programs that actively engage youth in positive ways, through education, after school programs, peaceful conflict resolution, and mentoring. It provides family and community support, thus bolstering the environments in which children develop and mature. These community-based programs reduce rates of violence more effectively and at a substantially lower cost than criminal enforcement and incarceration.

The Youth PROMISE Act will help engage and divert at-risk youth proactively, before they slip into cycles of violence, incarceration, and despair. In summary, H.R. 1318 will help make our communities stronger, safer and healthier. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at brian@cjcj.org or at (415) 621-5661 ext. 121.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brian Goldstein, Policy Analyst