



April 30, 2015

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
135 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
530 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Grassley and Senator Whitehouse:

On behalf of the Act 4 Juvenile Justice (Act4JJ) Campaign, we are writing to express our gratitude to you for your continued leadership in the area of juvenile justice. We applaud your introduction of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2015. This legislation is an important tool to help us reduce delinquency and protect our children's futures.

Act4JJ is a campaign of the National Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Coalition (NJJJPC), which represents more than 80 national organizations that work on youth development and juvenile justice issues. Act4JJ is composed of juvenile justice, child welfare, mental health, and youth development organizations advocating for the reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJJPA) and increased federal funding for juvenile justice programs and services.

We thank you for the work you have done to reintroduce a JJJPA reauthorization bill that helps ensure the safety of our most vulnerable young people. We are particularly grateful for provisions in this bill that strengthen the JJJPA's core protections for youth. These include improvements that address racial and ethnic disparities, keep youth out of secure confinement and adult jails, promote trauma-informed programming, focus on addressing the unique needs of girls who are involved with the juvenile justice system, and address the need for quality indigent defense for youth.

It is essential that Congress reauthorize and strengthen this important law. Since the last reauthorization in 2002 there have been many developments in the field of juvenile justice that significantly impact practitioners' work. The bill recognizes and addresses many of these developments.

This bill also comes at an important juncture for the juvenile justice community. The JJDPa recently celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2014. As this landmark law enters a new decade, your bill will encourage the innovation necessary to continue to further develop effective reforms within the juvenile justice system.

Thank you again for your leadership in this area and your advocacy on behalf of children and youth across this country.

Sincerely,



Marie Williams
Executive Director
Coalition for Juvenile Justice
Co-Chair, Act4JJ Campaign



Marcy Mistrett
Chief Executive Officer
Campaign for Youth Justice
Co-Chair, Act4JJ Campaign