



Major County Sheriffs' Association

Sheriff Michael J. Bouchard

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The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harry Reid
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Democratic Leader Reid,

On behalf of the Major County Sheriffs' Association (MCSA) and Vice President of Government Affairs, I write to you today in support of S. 2123, the bipartisan *Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act of 2015 (SRCA)*. MCSA is an association of elected Sheriffs representing the Nation's largest counties with populations of 500,000 people or more. Collectively, we represent more than 100 million Americans.

Since its original introduction in October 2015, the *Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act* has undergone substantive and meaningful changes. MCSA raised various concerns with the original bill specifically associated with extensive retroactive provisions, the reduction of firearms offenses related to the armed career criminal statute and the lack of language expressly including local law enforcement in analyzing the impact of reentry from federal "non-violent low level offenders." Through good faith negotiations from both sides of the aisle with the overall goal of public safety, MCSA now believes S. 2123 is a positive step towards addressing our criminal justice system's inadequacies.

The improved *SRCA* eliminates all changes to the armed career criminal statute, substantially limits retroactivity, adds a mandatory sentencing enhancement for fentanyl crimes, and adds an annual report requirement outlining how savings from the *SRCA* will be used to increase investment in law enforcement – specifically through crime prevention to combat gangs and high level drug traffickers, hire train and equip officers and prosecutors, and promote programs using evidence-based practices to help reduce crime and recidivism. Finally, MCSA is extremely pleased with the addition of S. 1119, the *National Criminal Justice Commission Act of 2015*.

MCSA has long advocated for the creation of a commission that would review the state of our criminal justice system, seek out areas of weakness and inefficiency, and develop solutions that will help provide a strategic plan to combat crime and promote public safety. While there have been numerous reports and panels set to examine specific elements of the criminal justice system, there has been no clear picture on how we should move forward on a broader multidisciplinary approach that covers all elements of the criminal justice system. At a time when local law enforcement budgets are still recovering from the economic recession and most

agencies are still short staffed, federal grant funding has all but been eviscerated, we believe a comprehensive look into the entire criminal justice system is warranted.

We applaud you and your staffs' commitment to public safety and willingness to compromise. Countless hours were invested and we commend everyone involved for their hard work, transparency, and courage to confront what is often seen as a politically divisive issue. As we move forward, MCSA stands ready to assist in advancing this balanced and just legislation.

Very Respectfully,

Michael J. Bouchard

Michael J. Bouchard, Sheriff, Oakland County (MI)
Vice President – Government Affairs, Major County Sheriffs' Association

