

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 26, 2017

Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein
Office of the Deputy Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20530

Director Mark Inch
Federal Bureau of Prisons
United States Department of Justice
320 First Street NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Deputy Attorney General Rosenstein and Director Inch:

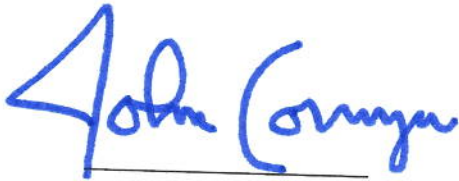
We are a group of United States senators who strongly support efforts to reform our federal prison system by lowering costs, reducing recidivism, and rehabilitating prisoners so that they can become productive members of society upon release. We write to express serious concerns about the Bureau of Prisons' (BOP) revised Statement of Work (SOW) for Residential Reentry Centers (RRCs), which appears to eliminate Cognitive Behavioral Programming (CBP) and a Social Services Coordinator (SSC) position. We believe that these changes in programming and personnel will compromise public safety, decrease inmate accountability, and lead to increased recidivism rates. We also understand that the BOP is reducing its use of Residential Reentry Centers without explanation or advance notice to those most affected. As a consequence, inmates are spending more time in prison, being released directly from prison into the community without the necessary supervision, or spending insufficient time in transitional facilities. These changes, particularly in the absence of a justification, threaten to make our communities less safe while increasing BOP operating costs over time.

Decades of research have shown that providing Cognitive Behavioral Programming in halfway houses reduces recidivism and results in significant savings to the taxpayer. Prison Social Services Coordinators have also played critical roles in facilitating inmates' successful reentry into society by connecting them with employment and other resources through community partnerships and ensuring continuity of care.

The long list of benefits deriving from these resources--including safer communities and reduced recidivism—far outweighs their costs. We urge you to reinstate Cognitive Behavior Programming and the Social Services Coordinator position into the revised Statement of Work and to refrain from decreasing the use of Residential Reentry Centers without transparency and adequate notice to interested parties. In addition, we ask that you provide staff for the undersigned senators with a briefing to explain the decisions underlying the revised Statement of Work and the reduction in residential re-entry center use.

Thank you for your timely attention to this important matter.

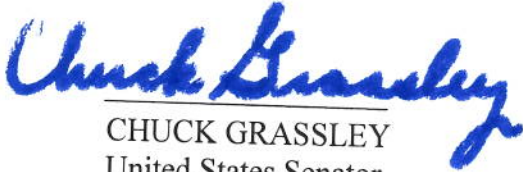
Sincerely,



JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator



SHELDON WHITEHOUSE
United States Senator



CHUCK GRASSLEY
United States Senator



AMY KLOBUCHAR
United States Senator



ROB PORTMAN
United States Senator



AL FRANKEN
United States Senator



THOM TILLIS
United States Senator



BRIAN SCHATZ
United States Senator