

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ ,

Please do everything you can to expand “Good-Time Credits” for prison inmates, including supporting the Barber Amendment and the Sentencing Reform Act.

**The Barber Amendment** is a simple two-sentence statutory amendment which reduces prison overcrowding and incarceration costs without disrupting release or reentry processes and public safety, by restoring federal “good-time allowances” to pre-1987 levels, allowing prisoners to earn their way to shorter sentences by good behavior, active rehabilitation, and (where available) participation in restorative justice . The Barber Amendment alone will save \$1.2 billion federal dollars every year-- basically an austerity bill working through sentencing laws.

**The Sentencing Reform Act** is a further step toward both equal justice and reducing prison expenditures and overcrowding, establishing a hybrid system of parole, increasing good-time allowances and re-entry opportunities, repealing mandatory sentencing to allow judges more freedom to tailor the sentence to the offender, and establishing a 1-to-1 federal sentencing ratio for crack and powder cocaine.

Despite the prison-building boom of the last 20 years, prison overcrowding nationwide has become so serious that in September 2012 the GAO sounded the alarm. In its detailed report on the state of the Federal Bureau of Prisons (GAO-12-743), the GAO says the matter is only to get worse unless firm action is taken now.

What sort of action?

According to a Congressional Research Service (CRS) report titled "The Federal Prison Population Buildup: Overview, Policy Changes, Issues, and Options," Congress cannot build its way out of the mass incarceration dilemma it now faces. The report recommends Congress "changing or reversing some of the policies that have been put into place over the years which contributed to the increasing number of federal prison inmates," specifically increasing good-time credits and special-programming credits,\* and reinstating the option of parole for felony crimes. (Parole will still need to be earned!)

This supports the long-held views of many, including FedCURE and other advocate organizations, former and current members of Congress, high-level government officials, the nations most respected independent nonpartisan think tanks, prominent scholars, criminal justice professionals, and an overwhelming majority of the public.

It is also my own view.

Please act on this as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration,

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(signature)

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(date)

\*Like those described in Paul Pommells' novel [Redemption Story](#)