



LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS

To Reduce Crime & Incarceration

The Continued Federal Fight

Pell Grant Restoration

This quarter, Law Enforcement Leaders (LEL) engaged in a campaign advocating for the restoration of Pell grants for incarcerated people in order to improve in-prison education across the country. In August, LEL issued a [press statement](#) and submitted letters signed by 47 members of LEL to the United States [House](#) and [Senate](#) in support of the REAL Act, a bipartisan bill that would lift the ban on federal Pell grants for people behind bars. The ban was implemented as part of the 1994 Omnibus Crime Bill.

As discussed in our letter, given the data and research illustrating the effectiveness of prison higher education in recidivism reduction, Pell grant restoration is likely to improve returning citizens' ability to reintegrate into their communities successfully, which will promote public safety in the long run.

Also as part of the Pell grant campaign, LEL has joined forces with bipartisan allies at the [Unlock Higher Ed](#) coalition to brief members of the House and Senate on September 17 on Capitol Hill. All LEL members are welcome to attend this congressional briefing. Please see the invitation details below.

At the briefing, our Senior Counsel **Taryn Merkl** will moderate a panel discussion involving three LEL members and formerly incarcerated individuals who have benefitted from higher education. They will discuss the benefits of in-prison education and why higher education in prison is a key way to reduce recidivism. LEL's Executive Director and former New Orleans Police Superintendent **Ronal Serpas**; Colorado's former Executive Director of Corrections **Rick Raemisch**; and Sheriff **Peter J. Koutoujian** of Middlesex County, Massachusetts will participate in the public briefing as well as additional meetings in the Senate.

Please RSVP here if you can attend.

The flyer features a dark blue background with yellow text. The title is in a large, bold, serif font. Below the title, the date and time are listed in a smaller, sans-serif font. A note about refreshments is also included. At the bottom right, there are two logos: 'LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS' with a shield icon and 'UNLOCK HigherEd' with a green and blue icon.

“Restoring Higher Education Opportunities for Incarcerated Students”

Tuesday, September 17th // 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
106 Senate Dirksen Office Building

Light refreshments will be served.

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 **UNLOCK HigherEd**

First Step Act Implementation

LEL continues to monitor the implementation of the First Step Act and, together with other groups, has joined a [letter](#) to urge Congress to fully fund the bill. When the First Step Act passed, Congress authorized \$75 million per year in funding for the Bureau of Prisons to implement the legislation, however this year’s executive budget did not appropriate any funding towards the law. We now urge Congress to allocate the full amount of funding so that the First Step Act can expand available program offerings and properly incentivize incarcerated people to promote their rehabilitation and successful reentry.

State Advocacy & Research

On the state level, in July, LEL advocated for the passage of North Carolina’s First Step Act together with allies from Families Against Mandatory Minimums and the Justice Action Network. In addition to submitting a [new letter of support](#) from LEL to North Carolina lawmakers regarding an amended version of the bill, former Greenville Police Chief and Executive Fellow of Police Foundation **Hassan**

Aden penned an op-ed in the *Fayetteville Observer* in support of the bill.

Over the summer, LEL staff actively engaged with LEL Executive Board member **Jim E. Johnson** and coalition membership to begin development of an LEL clearinghouse. This clearinghouse will highlight criminal justice reforms and case studies of strategies successfully implemented by members in their jurisdictions. We will send out a brief survey to the coalition shortly to learn more about members' programs, and we hope that you will participate in our research. **In the meantime, please email us if you would like your program or policy to be featured in our clearinghouse.**

We are also starting to plan our state advocacy work for the 2019-2020 legislative sessions. If you are working on criminal justice reforms in your jurisdiction, please **let us know** so we can include your jurisdiction in our planning!

Member Efforts in Local Jurisdictions

Our members continue to advance innovative policies, conversations, and reforms in locales across the country.

- In California, **George Gascón**, San Francisco District Attorney, **proposed** a Sentencing Review Unit that would look at nonviolent drug offenses and revisit past sentences. If funded and implemented, the unit would comprehensively review prior cases to identify those appropriate for a sentence reduction under a new California law.
- In Utah, Salt Lake City District Attorney **Sim Gill** **announced** a diversion program that will prioritize rehabilitation over prison for low-level offenders; DA Gill expects the program to divert between 750 and 1,000 individuals per year away from jail.
- On the other side of the country, the success of Middlesex County Sheriff **Peter Koutoujian's** Medication-Assisted Treatment and Directed Opioid Recovery program was **highlighted** as a model program to treat inmates with substance abuse and reduce recidivism.
- **Ronal Serpas** **presented** on a panel in New Orleans on Louisiana's reforms to reduce unnecessary incarceration. Serpas demonstrated that smart reforms improve public safety using data collected and analyzed by the LEL team.

- Meanwhile, back in our nation’s capital, LEL members Houston Police Chief **Art Acevedo**, Manhattan District Attorney **Cyrus Vance**, and D.C. Police Chief **Peter Newsham** came together with colleagues across the nation to address tension between prosecutors and police regarding policy and practice reforms. This statement of principles flowed from that meeting.
- In national news, **Ronal Serpas** wrote an op-ed in USA Today, together with Miriam Krinsky, the Executive Director of Fair & Just Prosecution, advocating for fair investigations and better handling of police informants.
- And last, but certainly not least, making headlines on Good Morning America, Chief **George Kral** of Toledo, Ohio began “Cops and Cones” in July, a local community policing project to increase law enforcement engagement by having officers deliver free ice cream to residents from an ice cream truck owned by the Toledo police department! Check out these fun pictures!



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Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime and Incarceration unites nearly 200 current and former police chiefs, federal and state chief prosecutors, and attorneys general from all 50 states to urge for a reduction in both crime and incarceration. With this group, law enforcement joins the emerging movement calling for an end to unnecessary, widespread incarceration.

- For inquiries, please contact info@lawenforcementleaders.org
- To become a Law Enforcement Leaders member, contact us [here](#).

