



# The Reentry Act

House Sponsors: **Representatives Paul Tonko (D-NY), Mike Turner (R-OH), John Rutherford (R-FL), and David Trone (D-MD)**

Senate Sponsors: **Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Mike Braun (R-IN)**

## Supporting Organization Statements:

*“The American Jail Association strongly supports the passage of the Reentry Act. The legislation under consideration would enable those who are incarcerated to receive Medicaid-supported services 30 days prior to release, enabling jails to stabilize them with medications. The current Medicaid policy excludes incarcerated individuals from receiving services. When treatment is unavailable, the likelihood of reoffending increases, which negatively impacts public safety.”*

❖ **Darren Sieger, MS, CJM, President, American Jail Association**

*“The Reentry Act of 2023 is a positive step towards closing the continuum of care gap for inmates. The Major County Sheriffs of America supports assisting these individuals in order to set them up for success as they are released from incarceration, as we know this is an incredibly important time in a person’s journey to recovery.”*

❖ **Sheriff Dennis M. Lemma, Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA) President**

*“Sheriffs applaud Congressmen Tonko, Turner, Rutherford and Trone’s commitment to addressing the Medicaid inmate exclusion, Congress must follow his lead and terminate this outdated and unconstitutional policy. This would be another great step in helping sheriffs with the continuation of care that their community members need.”*

❖ **National Sheriffs’ Association**

*“The Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy has been a barrier to wellness for people who are justice system involved for far too long, especially for those with mental illness. As people reenter the community, the result is that they are not connected to the care they need most. NAMI is deeply grateful to Representatives Tonko, Turner, Rutherford, and Trone for introducing the Reentry Act, which will help to address the mental health care needs of people returning to the community immediately before, during and after re-entry and, ultimately, save lives.”*

❖ **Hannah Wesolowski, Chief Advocacy Officer at NAMI**

*“The bipartisan Reentry Act will correct outdated policies that prevent incarcerated individuals from receiving effective medications for opioid use disorder — this is a crucial action in Congress’s ongoing efforts to address the overdose crisis, make addiction treatment more accessible, and save lives. The Overdose*

*Prevention Initiative is proud to support the Reentry Act, and we thank Congressman Tonko for his ongoing commitment to removing longstanding barriers to addiction treatment.”*

❖ **Libby Jones, Program Director of the Overdose Prevention Initiative**

*“The Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy leads to an interruption in access to needed medical, mental health, and addiction treatment for jail inmates who disproportionately suffer from chronic medical conditions and substance use disorders. The MIEP leads to poorer health outcomes and higher recidivism rates. NACo applauds the reintroduction of the Reentry Act, a key measure in strengthening counties’ ability to connect people to critical health care as they leave incarceration, including advancing connections to critical behavioral and mental health treatment and other services needed to protect their health, and the health of the community.”*

❖ **National Association of Counties Executive Director Matthew Chase**

*“Substance use disorder is a chronic disease, and our country must do everything we can to ensure all individuals in recovery get the long-term care they need. People who are in prison, especially those approaching release, need access to treatment to support a successful reentry to society. The recent enactment of the Mainstreaming Addiction Treatment Act (MAT Act) was a tremendous step forward in expanding access to treatment for opioid use disorder. With the introduction of the Medicaid Reentry Act, we have an opportunity to meet another critical, unmet area of need for SUD patients.”*

❖ **AAPA President and Chair of the Board of Directors, Jennifer M. Orozco DMSc, PA-C, DFAAPA**

*“Most people returning home from jail and prison have significant unaddressed mental health, substance use disorder, and physical health care needs. Disruptions in health coverage and care contribute to our nation's extremely high rate of overdose and suicide at reentry. The Reentry Act is a critical means of connecting people with their health coverage and needed care to make the transition home successful. LAC strongly supports this bipartisan legislation which will strengthen equitable access to community-based services, medications, and supports, helping people to become healthier and to avoid additional contact with the criminal legal system.”*

❖ **Gabrielle de la Guéronnière, Vice President of Health & Justice Policy at the Legal Action Center**

*“For too long, the inmate exclusion has frustrated the attempts of community and correctional health systems to collaborate in order to support people as they leave incarceration. The inmate exclusion has created inefficient systems that burden local jurisdictions and people who end up incarcerated because of unmet mental health needs and substance use disorders. The Reentry Act is a major step to removing this roadblock. Providing access to Medicaid services for eligible beneficiaries before release will give local jurisdictions the tools to fight the opioid epidemic, allows correctional and community health systems to collaborate in new ways, creates off ramps from the justice system, and ensures that people can leave incarceration with the community support necessary to succeed.”*

❖ **Dan Mistak, JD, Director of Healthcare Initiatives for Justice-Involved Populations at Community Oriented Correctional Health Services**

*“Across the country, people seeking treatment for addiction and co-occurring conditions struggle to access care—especially those in America’s prisons and jails. Reforming payment policies for health care, including substance use and mental health treatment, among people who are incarcerated will expand access to evidence-based care and save lives. ASAM commends these bipartisan leaders for introducing the Reentry Act and urges Congress to pass this critical legislation quickly.”*

❖ **Brian Hurley, MD, president-elect of the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)**

*“Ensuring individuals have timely access to substance use disorder, mental health, and other health-related services before release from incarceration will facilitate the transition to community-based care and secure continuity of care necessary to help break the cycle of recidivism. ABHW applauds the introduction of the Reentry Act. This legislation is critical to improving health outcomes, advancing equity, and increasing reentry success.”*

❖ **Maeghan Gilmore, Vice President, Government Affairs, Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness (ABHW)**

## **Supporting Organizations**

AAPA; A New PATH (Parents for Addiction Treatment & Healing); Academic Consortium on Criminal Justice and Health; Addiction Professionals of North Carolina; Advocacy and Research on Reproductive Wellness of Incarcerated People at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine; AIDS United; American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work; American Association of Psychiatric Pharmacists (AAPP); American Counseling Association; American jail Association; American Osteopathic Academy of Addiction Medicine; American Society of Addiction Medicine; AMJ Training & Education; Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Healthcare; Association for Behavioral Health and Wellness; Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs; Boston Medical Center Health System; CADA of Northwest Louisiana; California Consortium of Addiction Programs & Professionals; Center for Behavioral Wellness; Clinical Social Work Association; Community Catalyst; Community Oriented Correctional Health Services; Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA); Down Home NC; Drug Policy Alliance; Faces & Voices of Recovery; Fox Valley Perinatology; Fruit of Labor Action Research & Technical Assistance, LLC; Futures Without Violence; Global Alliance for Behavioral Health and Social Justice; Hearts on a Wire; HIV Alliance; Horizons; Kin Health & Wellness, SPC; Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime & Incarceration; Legal Action Center; Major County Sheriffs of America; NASTAD; National Alliance for Medication Assisted Recovery (NAMA Recovery); National Alliance on Mental Illness; National Association for Behavioral Healthcare; National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers; National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors; National Coalition of STD Directors; National Commission on Correctional Health Care; National Council of Churches; National Health Care for the Homeless Council; National Juvenile Justice Network; National Sheriffs’ Association; North Carolina Formerly Incarcerated Transition Program; On The Bright Side, LLC; Oregon Health and Science University, Scappoose Clinic; Overdose Crisis Response Fund; Overdose Prevention Initiative at the Global Health Advocacy Incubator; Police, Treatment, and Community Collaborative (PTACC); Prison Policy Initiative; R Street Institute; Reframe Health and Justice; Rights & Democracy; Shatterproof: Stronger Than Addiction; Stop Stigma Now; Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC) Inc.; The AIDS Institute; The Kennedy Forum; The Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc.; Treatment Communities of America; Ventura County Medical Center