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Release: December 23, 2009
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Coalition for Juvenile Justice Applauds Senate Leaders for Advancing Bipartisan Legislation to Strengthen Critical Juvenile Justice Policy

Washington, D.C. – The Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) applauds members of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee who voted to approve S. 678, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2009, strong bipartisan legislation that reaffirms and strengthens the partnership between federal, state and local governments to reduce youth delinquency and provide youth and families with the resources they need to be safe and successful.

CJJ commends and wishes to express gratitude to Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and Senators Herb Kohl (D-WI), Arlen Specter (D-PA) and Richard Durbin (D-IL) for their leadership as original authors of the bill, and Senators Olympia Snowe (R-ME), Susan Collins (R-ME), Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Al Franken (D-MN) for joining as co-sponsors.

“With the approval of S. 678, Senate Judiciary leaders have once again demonstrated their continuing belief in and commitment to effective and bipartisan federal policies that work in the best interest of our nation’s youth, families and communities,” said David Schmidt, CJJ National Chair and President of the New Mexico Council on Crime and Delinquency. “We commend them for their courage and wisdom, and stand ready to work with them to ensure that S. 678 is approved by the full Senate as soon as possible.”

CJJ also congratulates those who have worked tirelessly to ensure reauthorization of the JJDPA and the provision of resources necessary to optimally achieve the purposes of this long-standing, critically important federal statute.

“The approval of S. 678 as amended is a milestone achieved that reflects the remarkable work that CJJ members and allies across the nation have accomplished over the last few years to improve and strengthen the JJDPA,” said CJJ Executive Director Nancy Gannon Hornberger. “A diverse, nationwide cross-section of advocates, experts and practitioners has stayed engaged and lifted their voices every step of the way -- a true testament to the lasting good our collective efforts can produce for our nation’s youth, families and communities.”

CJJ is a national nonprofit association representing governor-appointed advisory groups on juvenile justice from the U.S. states, territories and the District of Columbia, along with likeminded individual and organizational members. CJJ is also the fiscal sponsor and principal partner of the National Juvenile Justice Network (NJN).

In 2009, CJJ celebrates its 25th year. Today, we proudly represent a diverse body of more than 1,500 members—juvenile justice practitioners, service providers, youth, parents, public officials, concerned citizens and others – all dedicated to creating optimal delinquency prevention programs, policies and practices, and ensuring that every court-involved youth is given an opportunity to reclaim his/her life and to connect positively with family and community life.

For more information, visit us at: www.juvjustice.org and www.njjn.org

In 2008, the CJJ Council of SAGs – our state leaders who come together as a policy-setting body – ratified a Platform of Position which sets forth thirteen (13) recommendations on JJDP A Reauthorization as guidance to members of Congress. We are pleased to note that all of our recommendations are reflected in S. 678, either in whole or in significant part. The Platform can be viewed in its entirety at http://www.juvjustice.org/reauthorization_platform.html.

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