

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 18, 2013

Contact:

Alexandra Staropoli, 202-467-0864 ext. 109, staropoli@juvjustice.org



CJJ Applauds Introduction of Youth PROMISE Act in the Senate

The Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) is pleased to announce that Senators Landrieu (D-LA) and Inhofe (R-OK) have introduced the Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunity, Mentoring, Intervention, Support and Education (Youth PROMISE) Act (S. 1307) in the Senate. More than 300 law enforcement groups, national, state and community organizations, and child welfare and juvenile justice experts support the bill.

“The Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) commends Senators Landrieu and Inhofe for their bipartisan leadership,” said Nancy Gannon Hornberger, CJJ’s executive director. “CJJ wholeheartedly supports the Youth PROMISE Act as a means of protecting community safety while building positive outcomes for youth at greatest risk of victimization and involvement in violence and delinquency.”

Aimed at reducing youth violence and victimization and curbing public costs in the most at-risk communities, the Youth PROMISE Act invests in effective, empirically-guided delinquency prevention efforts – including before and after-school programming, family strengthening, positive youth development, employment, and intensive case management and treatment approaches.

“We must act to stop the heartbreaking cycle of violence that traps so many of our young people,” Senator Landrieu said. “Studies show that early childhood programs, summer school programs, mentoring, after-school programs and job-training programs can lead to decreased youth arrests. The Youth PROMISE Act invests in programs like these that we know to be effective, as well as efforts to bring together community members and organizations concerned with the safety and welfare of children.”

“We must recognize the necessity of putting our nation’s youth on the right track early in life, and while it starts with the family, far too often our kids turn elsewhere for their direction and guidance,” said Senator Inhofe. “The Youth PROMISE Act seizes upon evidence-based approaches to keeping this nation’s youth away from gangs, drugs, and violence, ultimately giving them a greater chance of leading fulfilling and prosperous lives.”

Coalition for Juvenile Justice | 1319 F Street NW | Suite 402 | Washington, DC 20004

202.467.0864 | www.juvjustice.org | info@juvjustice.org

CJJ supports the Youth PROMISE Act because:

- **The Youth PROMISE Act empowers local communities.** The Act will fund and implement evidence-based practices proven to reduce youth violence and delinquency and allows community stakeholders to work together—via a local coordinating council that includes law enforcement, community-based organizations, schools, faith organizations, healthcare providers, social service providers, and mental health providers—to create comprehensive community-driven solutions.
- **The Youth PROMISE Act saves money and spares human suffering.** Youth PROMISE Act savings created by investments in community-connected prevention and rehabilitation approaches, rather than in more costly and ineffective prosecution and incarceration, will be reinvested in future prevention and intervention efforts. Not only will the Act save lives and reduce tragic human costs associated with gangs and delinquency, it will yield overall savings to communities according to both financial and life-quality measures. Local communities will be held accountable for their programmatic and cost-savings success by state-level commissions.
- **The Youth PROMISE Act improves the federal-state partnership in juvenile justice.** The Act provides for the increased local coordination and state evaluation of federal programs designed to reduce and prevent juvenile delinquency and establishes a federal commission charged to carry out a nationwide, comprehensive study of the effectiveness of delinquency/crime prevention and intervention strategies.

Ken Schatz, Vermont State Advisory Group member and chair of CJJ’s Government Relations Committee added, “Introduction of the Youth PROMISE Act in the Senate is great news. If passed, this important legislation would help strengthen the federal-state partnership on juvenile justice – a critical relationship for juvenile justice reform.”

###

The Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) envisions a nation where fewer children are at risk of delinquency; and if they are at risk or involved with the justice system, they and their families receive every possible opportunity to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives. CJJ is a nationwide coalition of State Advisory Groups (SAGs) and allies dedicated to preventing children and youth from becoming involved in the courts and upholding the highest standards of care when youth are charged with wrongdoing and enter the justice system.