# Senators unveil revised bipartisan prison, sentencing legislation

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WASHINGTON – Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-IA), and Senators Mike Lee (R-UT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) today introduced revised legislation to reduce recidivism, promote public safety, and improve fairness in sentencing of federal crimes. The revised *First Step Act*, S.3649, has been [endorsed](#) by President Donald Trump.

"This compromise represents years of work by a bipartisan coalition in order to take the next step in making our federal drug sentencing laws fairer. These reforms help relieve our overcrowded prisons, redirect funding to addiction treatment, help keep our communities safe, and restore faith in our justice system. This is the best chance in a generation to make meaningful changes in our federal drug sentencing laws. We cannot squander it," Durbin said.

"The Senate's revised First Step Act is a landmark opportunity to increase fairness in prison sentencing and improve safety in American communities by helping inmates bound for release become productive members of society. This bill represents the culmination of a lot of hard work by lawmakers and advocates from across the political spectrum. President Trump has shown real leadership to advance these important reforms – the most significant in a generation. We have a real opportunity to make these important reforms a reality before the end of the year," Grassley said.

The revised *First Step Act* combines prison reform proposals that overwhelmingly passed in the House of Representatives earlier this year with sentencing reform provisions from the broadly bipartisan *[Sentencing Reform and Corrections Act](#)*, which was authored by Durbin and Grassley and passed the Senate Judiciary Committee in February by a vote of 16-5.

The comprehensive package aims to reduce crime by helping low-risk inmates prepare to successfully rejoin society through participation in proven recidivism reduction and professional development programs. It also improves fairness in prison sentences by recalibrating certain mandatory minimum sentences, granting greater discretion for judges in sentencing of low-level, nonviolent drug crimes and clarifying congressional intent on sentencing enhancements for certain crimes involving firearms. It also preserves the maximum potential sentences for violent and career criminals. The legislation also allows petitions for retroactive application of the *Fair Sentencing Act* to be considered on an individual basis to reduce sentence disparities between crack and powder cocaine offenses.

Under this legislation, any savings generated by the reforms would be reinvested into law enforcement programs to further reduce crime and improve community safety.

More details are available in the [fact sheet](#) and [section-by-section summary](#).

The legislation is supported by a wide range of stakeholders from key law enforcement organizations to reform advocates. Supporters include:

- [Fraternal Order of Police](#)
- [National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives](#)
- [Cut50](#)
- [Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime & Incarceration](#)
- [National District Attorneys Association](#)
- [International Association of Chiefs of Police](#)

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell [pledged](#) to hold a vote on the compromise proposal provided that it has 60 votes in the Senate. Along with Durbin, Grassley, Lee, Booker, Graham, and Whitehouse, this proposal is currently cosponsored by Senators Tim Scott (R-SC), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), Joni Ernst (R-IA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Jerry Moran (R-KS), and Chris Coons (D-DE).

- [Bill text](#)
- [Fact sheet](#)
- [Section-by-section summary](#)