

Congressman Davis, Mayor Daley Push for Federal Appropriations for Second Chance Act

Washington D.C.

- Congressman Danny K. Davis joined by Mayor Richard M. Daley and social service agencies, civic groups, and individuals held a press conference to discuss the Second Chance Act of 2007.

Davis:

Second Chance Act is a first step, work is needed to overcome the barriers that prevent individuals from successful re-entry

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- Congressman Danny K. Davis joined by Mayor Richard M. Daley and social service agencies, civic groups, and individuals held a press conference to discuss the Second Chance Act of 2007.

Congressman Danny K. Davis is the chief sponsor of The Second Chance Act of 2007, which is designed to create programs to help ex-offenders reintegrate back into society.

As of March 30, 2008, the Illinois Department of Corrections reported that approximately 33,000 individuals are on parole in Illinois.

In Chicago,

532 are juveniles and 15,252 are adults.

In addition, 30% of individuals on parole from the Illinois Department of Corrections live in the 7th Congressional District.

Congressman Danny K. Davis said, "Mayor Daley and I join forces today to discuss how important this legislation is to the City of Chicago and to push Congress to fully fund the Second Chance Act of 2007. The Act is landmark because it is comprehensive legislation that will have an everlasting impact across the country, especially for our big cities like Chicago. It is the first time in U. S. history, where we as a nation are moving away from strict 'lock-em-up and throw away the key' policies. "

The

Act passed in the U. S. House of Representatives by 347 to 62, in the U. S. Senate by unanimous consent, and the President signed the legislation into law on April 9, 2008.

Organizations and elected officials from all over the country are organizing for full funding in the 2009 budget.

Calling

on Congress to Fund the Second Chance Act of 2007, Mayor Richard M. Daley said, "Far too many prisoners are not prepared for life outside prison. Most of them are poorly educated and have few, if any, job skills.

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So we probably shouldn't be surprised that half of them are re-arrested within three years. We simply have to break that cycle if we expect our crime rate to continue to fall."

As part of the City of Chicago's Federal Agenda, Mayor Daley will direct his legislative team to beef-up Washington lobbying efforts in behalf of the Second Chance Act. In addition to highlighting the Second Chance Act as a appropriation priority, Mayor Daley will work with his colleagues as part of the U. S. Conference of Mayors to ensure that the nation's legislators also understand the need for full funding of the Second Chance Act, and that every major city and town need to support full funding now.

Passage of the Second Chance Act will go a long way towards helping individuals get their lives back on track and to become contributors to the further development of society. We know that Second Chance is no panacea and that there are hundreds of barriers blocking and hindering successful re-entry.

Davis said, "People can't get jobs because of their backgrounds. Individuals are barred from getting college educations. Individuals are barred from getting living in public housing. All of these and many other barriers to successful re-entry must be addressed if we are to say that Second Chance is actually a reality."

Businesses have policies which simply state we do not hire people with felony convictions. We know that some public housing policies deny individuals with felony convictions the right to live in public housing. In many instances individuals with felony convictions cannot make use of federal monies to attend school, or develop a skill.

"I applaud Mayor Daley for

instituting policies which provides a fair shot for employment opportunities with the City of Chicago. And for the City's ongoing analysis and discussion about how to eliminate barriers that prevent individuals from successfully reintegrating back into society," continued Davis.

The Second Chance Act of 2007 will provide program services in the following areas:

i
State and Local
Reentry Demonstration Projects

i
State and Local
Reentry Courts

i
Prosecution Drug
Treatment Alternatives to Prison

i
Family-Based
Substance Abuse Treatment

i
Evaluate
Educational Methods at Prisons, Jail, and Juvenile Facilities

i
Technology
Careers Training Demonstration Grants

i
Offender Reentry
Substance Abuse and Criminal Justice Collaboration

i
Responsible
Reintegration of Offenders Grants for job placement and training

i
Federal Prisoner
Reentry Initiative

i
Offender Reentry
Research