

**LETTER IN SUPPORT OF  
THE DEMOCRACY RESTORATION ACT (H.R. 3335 / S. 1516)  
FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE LEADERS**

December 10, 2009

Dear Member of Congress:

We, the undersigned law enforcement and criminal justice leaders, urge you to support and co-sponsor the Democracy Restoration Act, a bill which seeks to restore federal voting rights to the nearly four million Americans living, working and paying taxes in our communities who have been disenfranchised because of a criminal conviction in their past. We support the restoration of voting rights because continuing to disenfranchise individuals after release from prison is ineffective law enforcement policy and violates core principles of democracy and equality.

There is no credible evidence that denying voting rights to people after release from prison does anything to reduce crime. In our judgment, just the opposite is true. Every year over 600,000 people leave prison. We must find new and effective ways to foster reintegration back into the community and prevent recidivism. We believe that bringing people into the political process makes them stakeholders in the community and helps steer former offenders away from future crimes.

The hallmark of a democratic government is that it reflects the views of the governed, views that are most readily expressed through the ballot box. As law enforcement and criminal justice officials, we are deeply committed to securing our system of American democracy. Carving a segment of the community out of the democratic process is inconsistent with America's best traditions and highest values.

People who commit crimes must and will serve all terms of their sentence. But once the criminal justice system has determined that they are ready to return to the community, they should receive both the rights and responsibilities that come with the status of being a citizen. Restoring the right to vote is simply good law enforcement policy.

To protect basic public safety and strengthen the core of our democracy, we urge you to use your leadership to pass this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Theodis Beck  
President, Association of State Correctional  
Administrators Secretary,  
North Carolina Department of Corrections

Jane Browning  
Executive Director, International  
Community Corrections Association

Col. Douglas DeLeaver  
Former National President, National  
Organization of Black Law Enforcement  
Executives  
Former Chief of Police, Maryland Transit  
Administration Police Force

Col. Dean Esserman  
Chief of Police, Providence Police  
Department

James Gondles, Jr.  
Executive Director, American Correctional  
Association

Ron Hampton  
Executive Director, National Black Police  
Association

Lisa Holley  
President, Association of Paroling  
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Charles J. Hynes  
District Attorney, Kings County, New York

Doug Jones  
Former U.S. Attorney, Northern District of  
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Justin Jones  
Director, Oklahoma Department of  
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Peg Lautenschlager  
Former Wisconsin Attorney General  
Former U.S. Attorney, Western  
District of Wisconsin

Tom Miller  
Iowa Attorney General

Jorge Montes  
Chairman, Illinois Prisoner Review  
Board

John F. Timoney  
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Chief of Police, Miami Police  
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Ashbel T. Wall  
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Carl Wicklund  
Executive Director, American  
Probation and Parole Association

Hubert Williams  
President, Police Foundation  
Former Chief of Police, Newark  
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