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Dear Senator:

I write on behalf of the American Bar Association (ABA), with almost 400,000 members nationwide, to express the ABA's strong support for the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2009 (S. 678) and to urge you to cosponsor this legislation.

Established in 1974 and most recently authorized in 2002 with bipartisan support, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act is based on a broad consensus that children, youth and families involved with the juvenile and criminal courts should be guarded by federal standards for care and custody, while also upholding the interests of community safety and the prevention of victimization. S. 678 makes meaningful improvements that expand several of the core protections of the Act, including deinstitutionalization of status offenders, reducing disproportionate minority contact, and improving its jail removal and sight and sound requirements. The legislation was introduced on March 24, 2009 by Senators Leahy, Specter, Kohl, and Durbin and currently has eight bipartisan cosponsors. On December 17, 2009, the Senate Judiciary Committee voted S. 678 out of Committee with bipartisan support.

We urge you to cosponsor S. 678 and support prompt consideration of it by the full Senate so that it will soon become law.

Sincerely,



Carolyn B. Lamm